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ABSTRACT

This document was designed to assist members of a program review team in conducting a program review and to assist school staff and parents in conducting a self-study in preparation for a formal review. The program review process is designed to evaluate the effects of curriculum, instructional methodologies, and effectiveness strategies on students, guide development of an assistance plan, and provide a model for a school's self-study. Chapter I describes the methodology and procedures to be used in a program review, the determination of the quality of a school curriculum and instructional program by means of a set of standards, and the means by which suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program might be developed. Chaper II describes the quality criteria and contains cautions for reviewers about the use of the criteria in diagnosing the quality of the school program. Chapter III describes how the transaction between the reviewing team and the school results in an assistance plan for improving the program offered to the students. Appendices list the criteria that describe a high-quality school and present a guide to be used by schools in conducting a self-study. (CB)

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Program Quality Review for High Schools

Process, Criteria, and Self-Study

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Bill Honig, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Sacramento, 1987

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Program Quality Review for High Schools

Process, Criteria, and Self-Study

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PREFACE

This document, Program Quality Review for High Schools: Process, Criteria, and Self-Study, is designed to assist members of a program review team in conducting a program review and school staff and parents in conducting a self-study in preparation for a formal review. The program review process is designed to evaluate the effects of curriculum, instructional methodologies, and effectiveness strategies on students; guide the development of an assistance plan; and provide a model for a school's self-study.

The document is divided into three chapters. Chapter I describes the methodology and procedures to be used in a program review; the determination of the quality of a school curriculum and instructional program by means of a set of standards; and the means by which suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program might be developed. Chapter II describes the quality criteria and contains cautions for reviewers about the use of the criteria in diagnosing the quality of the school program. Chapter III describes how the transaction between the reviewing team and the school results in an assistance plan for improving the program offered to the students.

Appendix A contains the criteria that describe a high-quality school in 15 areas:

- English/Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- History-Social Science
- Foreign Language
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Physical Education
- Vocational-Technical Education
- Students' Paths Through High School
- Integrated Skills
- Instructional Practices
- Special Needs
- Student Services: Guidance and Counseling
- Improvement Process
- The Culture of the School

Each criterion consists of a narrative statement portraying the central features of high quality. This statement is followed by a series of concrete descriptions indicative of this quality.

Appendix B contains a guide to be used by schools in conducting a self-study. All schools scheduled for a program review will complete a self-study prior to their review. It is hoped that other schools will find this guide useful as they assess the quality of their program during their planning process.

Both state and federal laws mandate the periodic review of schools receiving special funding through the consolidated application. It is hoped, however, that all schools, regardless of funding, will find the program review beneficial in their efforts to provide high-quality education for all students.

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CHAPTER I: PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

General Overview

What Is a Quality Program Review?

A school's quality program review is a process through which the effectiveness of the curriculum, instructional program, and schoolwide organizational strategies is diagnosed by means of a set of standards that describe a high-quality school program. As the result of this process, judgments can be made about the effect of the school program on the students at the school. The review, conducted by a team of educators not employed by the school district, typically occurs once every three years. Information about the school's program and its effect on the students is gathered by this visiting team primarily through observation of instruction; interviews with teachers, students, administrators, other instructional staff, and parents; and the review of pertinent documents. The team members then compare the information they receive with the quality standards to determine the extent to which the program received by the student matches the descriptions of a high-quality program.

The program review process yields information that is essential to the effective development of the school's curriculum and instructional program--information about what is working well and why and what should be changed. Program review is a valuable part in each school program improvement cycle of planning, implementing, evaluating, and modifying the planned program.

Purpose of the Program Review

The primary purpose of program review is to improve the quality of curriculum and instruction; it is a means for developing and sustaining a high-quality educational program for all students. For the school staff and parents, the review is a period in which to observe and discuss the effectiveness of the programs received by the students. The immediate benefits of this process are the decisions and plans to make specific improvements in the curriculum, instructional methodologies that impart that curriculum, and schoolwide organizational functions that support instruction.

The three major goals for a program review are:

- The generation of information by and for the school community on the status of the school's program
- The implementation of a model for improvement that includes diagnosis followed by external review followed by planning
- The focusing of the school community on improvement, specifically in relation to the quality criteria

The goals are accomplished when a school goes through the three phases of a program review, including the self-study that is carried out by the school community prior to the visit of an external review team; an intensive visit by an external review team, including review of the findings of the self-study; and planning for improvement, in which the combined findings of the self-study and the external review team are used.

The Scope of the Program Review

The program review process described in this handbook focuses on the extent to which the school curriculum, instructional methodologies, and schoolwide organizational strategies contribute toward a high-quality educational program for each student.

The quality criteria used in program review address the two major aspects of a school program--curriculum, or what is being taught; and the schoolwide policies, practices, and procedures that shape and support instruction. Curriculum criteria have been developed for the following subjects:

- English/Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- History-Social Science
- Foreign Language
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Physical Education
- Vocational-Technical Education

The schoolwide criteria include:

- Students' Paths Through High School
- Integrated Skills
- Instructional Practices
- Students with Special Needs
- Student Services: Guidance and Counseling
- Improvement Processes
- The Culture of the School

The Program Review Team

The program review team is made up of three to seven educators who have been certified by the California State Department of Education as qualified reviewers. Reviewers are selected for their knowledge of curriculum, instructional methodologies, and special programs, as well as for their outstanding interpersonal skills. Typically, they are teachers, departmental chairpersons, counselors, principals, or coordinators/directors of instruction from school districts, institutions of higher education, offices of county superintendents of schools, or, in some cases, the community. The majority of the team members, including the lead reviewer, must be from outside the school district that is requesting the review. Reviewers work together using the quality criteria to guide them in (1) gathering information about the school's program and the effects of the program on students; (2) forming a point of view about the workings of the school as they see it; and (3) developing a report to the school that includes findings, suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the program, and recognition of the program's strengths.

Review Strategy

The review strategy is based on the quality criteria contained in Appendix A of this handbook. Through a combination of observations of the instructional program and its impact on students, interviews with students and staff at the school, and documented evidence presented to the program

review team, the reviewers develop an understanding of the nature of the school program and its current effectiveness. Then, by comparing this understanding with the high-quality standards of the quality criteria, the reviewers can determine the kinds of changes that should occur to increase the effectiveness of the program.

Establishing an understanding of the school program requires an organized effort. The understanding is developed by having a clear idea of the school curriculum; by observing individual students through a case study approach; by analyzing a broader sample of current students' work; by summing up the comments of the instructional staff, the counseling staff, and the students themselves as to the students' current and past activities; and by reviewing instructional and management material used throughout the school. These observations are supplemented by discussions with staff, students, and parents. This knowledge forms the basis for the reviewers' judgments of the effects of instruction on the students.

As the reviewers begin to understand what is happening for the students, they also seek to find out what processes at the school have contributed to what is actually occurring. The reviewers seek explanations from the school staff members as to why they do things as they do, how curriculum decisions are made, where the instructional program comes from, how it is supported and improved, how plans are implemented, and so on. This analysis forms the basis of the reviewers' suggestions for improving instruction and guides the development of the assistance plan.

As the reviewers complete the review, a report of findings is prepared and shared with selected staff members and the principal. These staff members are referred to as key planners. (The role of the key planner will be discussed further in this handbook.) The report provides two types of findings: (1) the extent to which the quality of each aspect of the reviewed program matches the standard of the quality criteria; and (2) identification of areas that appear to be ready for improvement.

After the initial report of findings is shared, a final report is prepared in concert with the key planners. It includes concrete suggestions for improving or sustaining the effectiveness of the instructional program and recognizes practices of high quality. In developing suggestions, the reviewers identify areas ready for improvement and indicate how the improvement process at the school can be used to enhance or sustain program quality. Local, county, regional, and state resources are also considered in the development of the assistance plans. High-quality programs and practices are noted in the section of the report entitled "Recognition of Program Strengths."

For the goals of program review to be realized, reviewers and school personnel must recognize their responsibilities for ensuring that the review process is a means for developing and sustaining a high-quality educational program for each student at the school. The major responsibilities are shared by both the reviewers and the school community and fall into three categories: preparing for the review, conducting the review, and assisting after the diagnostic portion of the review.

Major Responsibilities of the School Community

While the team of reviewers is responsible for learning as much as possible about the program within a limited period of time, the school community is responsible for making sure that the team is gaining accurate and complete information about the program. A school community prepares for the program review by conducting a required self-study. A thorough study of the curriculum offered and the schoolwide strategies that support the delivery of that curriculum will enable the members to know how well their program is working and why. With this knowledge the school community will be able to assist the reviewers in gathering accurate information about the program so that the findings of the review, especially the suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program, will be complete. (NOTE: For further information on conducting the self-study, see Appendix B.)

The major responsibilities of the staff, parents, and community members involved in a program review are:

- To know the curriculum, planned instructional program, and schoolwide organizational strategies and their effect on the students and the paths they take through school
- To be familiar with the program review process and the quality criteria
- To be involved as individuals, as members of departments, counseling, or administrative staffs, and as a school's total staff in identifying the program's strengths and areas in need of improvement in relation to the program review quality criteria by determining which activities are working well and which are not
- To be ready to share this knowledge with the review team and to be able to direct reviewers to the information they need to fulfill their responsibilities

The key planners, a group of representative adults involved in the instructional program, are responsible for establishing a link between the review team and the school community. They share information with the review team in a way that enhances the development of a complete and cohesive picture of the school's curriculum and instructional programs.

The principal and the key planners assist the school community and reviewers in all aspects of the program review. They also serve as leaders in the

school's self-study process and assist the team in its information-gathering efforts during the meeting held to prepare for the review and in other formal and informal ongoing meetings. Their responsibilities also include (1) in a collaboration with the review team, developing suggestions into assistance plans; and (2) providing leadership roles in the school's implementation of these plans after the team leaves. (The selection of key planners is discussed beginning on page 6 of this document.)

Major Responsibilities of the Reviewers

The review team is generally responsible for learning as much about the program as can be learned in a limited period of time, comparing those perceptions with the quality criteria, and providing feedback to the school community on the effectiveness of the program. In order to do this successfully, members of the review team must:

- Review thoroughly the curriculum frameworks, handbook materials, and literature related to the curricular areas to be reviewed.
- Review thoroughly the model curriculum standards for these areas of concentrated review.
- Be fully conversant with the quality criteria and the process of the program review.
- Conduct the review thoroughly enough for the development of a clear and accurate understanding of the effectiveness of the instructional program.
- Use that knowledge to make workable suggestions for increasing or sustaining the effectiveness of the program.
- Put aside any bias toward a particular program or method.
- Use the school performance report and the self-study findings to facilitate discussions with the school staff and parents.
- Be able to inform the school of the team's understanding of the current effectiveness of the instructional program.
- Recognize and support the program improvement efforts of the school community.

Procedures for the Program Review

Appropriate information can be obtained from the complex setting of a secondary school by the use of methodology that is broad in scope yet thorough. Information about curriculum must be combined with knowledge about the organizational structure and the people involved, including the function of each department, counseling services, special programs, and other specific services that contribute to the students' experience in the school. The methods used in gathering information about the program, as described previously, ensure that the review will be thorough and consistent.

This section describes the steps needed to carry out a review: making the arrangements, contacting the school, preparing for the program review, and conducting the program review. Although instructions are directed toward the lead reviewer, they can easily be adapted for use by school personnel responsible for coordinating the review.

Making the Arrangements

Scheduling, mailing of materials, and arranging the liaison between reviewers and the school district take place at the local level. Most districts will be affiliated with other districts with which they share personnel to provide a pool of trained independent persons required for review teams. Most offices of county superintendents of schools provide coordination services to assist districts in the formation of consortium or other types of affiliation. Although there will be a variety of such arrangements, for simplicity the existence of a consortium of districts and of a person designated to coordinate review activities in the consortium are presumed. Note: The reader must adapt what is discussed here to the circumstances of the district being reviewed.

The team leader's involvement with the review of a particular school is initiated by the review coordinator. The coordinator will orient the lead reviewer to the procedures being used in the consortium, materials and in-service training the school's staff has received, and responsibilities for contacting district and school personnel.

Contacting the School

Consistent with consortium procedures, the lead reviewer will telephone the school's principal to

set up the review. This call, usually made two months before the review, should cover the following topics:

- Confirmation of schedule of events--times and dates of visits to the school by the lead and the full team
- Information the school should send to the reviewers ahead of time
- Information the school will receive ahead of time and how to get it
- Proposal of an agenda for the "review preparation meeting" by the reviewers, the principal, and key planners
- Curriculum areas selected by the school on which the review will focus
- Procedures used by the school in preparing the self-study
- Procedures used by the team before, during, and after the review
- Clarification of any concerns or questions

Discuss the selection of the key planners. The lead reviewer should discuss the selection of the key planners with the principal during the initial call to the school. As a part of the school's preparation activities, the principal selects a group of individuals to be directly involved with the process of program review during the self-study and the visit to the school. The most important criterion in the selection of the key planners is that they are familiar with and play a significant

part in the school's curricular and instructional improvement process. These individuals will work collaboratively with the review team to facilitate the ease in which the review is conducted and the results are reported. The key planners usually number from six to ten persons and may be selected from a wide range of adults involved in the school's program: teachers, departmental chairpersons, coordinators of the program, curriculum committee chairpersons, resource or specialist teachers, or any other of the school's staff members who are a significant part of the school's planning process. District personnel, school site council chairpersons, other committee or PTA chairpersons, and parents who are knowledgeable about the school's program may be included. The departmental chairpersons of the curriculum areas selected for intensive review must be selected as key planners.

Preparing for the Program Review

A successful program review depends on thorough preparation by the review team. In addition to completing the necessary arrangements, the team will read, study, and discuss a variety of materials before the initial meeting with the school principal and school planners. Some of these materials will be obtained through the consortium coordinator, while others will be obtained directly from the school. The basic set of materials includes:

- State Department of Education Program Quality Review for High Schools: Process, Criteria, and Self-Study
- State Department of Education Secondary Program Review Training Manual
- State Department of Education Model Curriculum Standards
- Curricular assessment results, statements of goals, statements of expectations, books in use, reading lists, and other items as determined by the school and the district
- School plan
- Summary statements of the school self-study
- School performance report
- Logistic information: maps, schedules, staff roster, and so on

Study the curriculum materials. The materials prepared by the State Department of Education include the Model Curriculum Standards and state curriculum frameworks and handbooks. These materials will provide the background standards for use in the discussions between the review team and the school's planners on curriculum issues. In addition, the review of the curriculum packet will help the team in the analysis of the school's curriculum and in the formulation of suggestions likely to have good results for the school.

Study the school self-study summary. The results of the self-study, along with the curriculum materials sent to the reviewers by the school, will provide the team a basic understanding of the curriculum being offered by the school and its impact on the students, as perceived by the school.

The reviewers will analyze the self-study and the curriculum materials, comparing them with the quality criteria and the expectations conveyed by the previously mentioned set of materials. The purpose is to identify the issues that should be

discussed at the meeting to be held to prepare for the review.

In preparing for the discussion on curriculum, reviewers should ask themselves the following questions:

- What is the common core of learning taught to every student?
- Are there major gaps in the curriculum for some students or for all students?
- How are the skills of interpretation, inference, problem solving, evaluation, and other higher-order thinking skills incorporated across curricular areas?
- How are the skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, calculating, and learning developed and integrated into the curriculum and instructional practices across all curricular areas?
- What kinds of expectations are held for the students?
- How are students guided through course offerings so that their learning opportunities are maximized?

Answering these questions will help clarify some of the issues and, by providing an indication of strengths and weaknesses to be confirmed by observation and interview, serve to guide the team as it begins its investigations.

Study the school performance report. The information on the school performance report

provides an essential context for the review in that it includes indices of the impact of the school's program on the students prior to and after the review. The data in the school performance report will help the reviewers make use of what they are discovering about the school's program. The school performance report has two parts. The first part, produced from data compiled by the state, covers (1) student enrollment in courses, giving an indication of the number of college-bound students and the rigor of the courses they are taking; (2) the result of the twelfth grade California Assessment Program tests over a three-year span; and (3) data about dropout rates and absenteeism. The second part, produced locally, includes information on:

1. The quality of the instructional program
2. The nature of the learning environment
3. The amount and quality of writing and homework
4. The number and types of books read
5. The community's support and parental participation
6. Awards and recognition achieved by students, teachers, or the school
7. Students' participation in extracurricular activities
8. The nature and quality of support for students with special needs

Given the extent of the overlap between the elements of the local school performance report and

the program review criteria, particularly items 1, 2, and 8 from the preceding list, a substantial part of the report may be included in the school's self-study.

The school performance report and the self-study, reviewed together, will place the program review in a context of time, set the stage for the visit, and help reviewers understand what they will be learning while at the school.

Read the school plan. A careful review of the school plan, including the discussion of the school budget and especially those curriculum areas selected for in-depth review, helps the reviewers understand what the school's priorities are, what the planned program is to accomplish, and how it will be accomplished.

Conducting the Program Review

Review Preparation Meeting with the School's Planners

The meeting held to prepare for the review takes place the day before the review. The purpose of this meeting is to establish a common understanding among reviewers, the principal, key planners, and appropriate district staff of what to expect during the review. The meeting is chaired by the lead reviewer. The lead reviewer and the principal should discuss in advance the purpose, roles, and process of the meeting. The agenda should include the following items:

- School background. The principal briefs the team on the historical and social context of the school. Recent events that have had a significant impact on the school's life are described.

- Program review background. The lead reviewer briefs school staff on the history and purpose of program review. The basic review methodology is explained, and the roles of the team members are clarified.

- Self-study discussion. This is the most substantial item on the agenda and usually requires the most time. The discussion should move through five steps:

  1. Discussion of the highlights of the curriculum documents, the local materials, the model curriculum standards, and the program quality criteria provided by the State Department of Education

  2. Discussion of the school's self-study process, including the results of the self-study in selected areas of the curriculum

  3. General discussion of the curriculum offered by the school and specific discussion of the two or more curriculum areas selected by the school for review

  4. Discussion of issues identified by the review team

5. Establishment of expectations for the curriculum focus and strategy of the review

If the local view as to curriculum differs substantially from the view contained in the quality criteria or the model curriculum standards, the differences should be discussed. From this discussion should come a shared understanding of how curriculum differences will be managed during the review. Note: Because the criteria and standards were developed with the help of major state and national curriculum organizations, representatives of local districts, and eminent scholars, substantive differences should be rare.

- School plan. The plan is discussed in order to determine how agreements about curricular instructional methodologies, the school's goals, and other issues were developed and are expected to be implemented.

- School performance report. The school planners and the review team discuss their interpretation of the data and information in the report, including past trends and future aspirations. The diagnostic values of data are discussed as to what areas are to be focused on and what strategy is to be used.

- Agreement on strategy and focus. Next, agreement is reached on the basic strategy the team will follow and the areas where an in-depth look would most likely be productive.

- Schedule of events. Final scheduling and logistics are worked out.

Introductory Meeting with the School's Staff (Optional)

If the principal and key planners believe it would be advantageous to the review process, arrangements can be made for a short, informal meeting of the school staff and the reviewers prior to the beginning of classes on the first morning of review. During this meeting the reviewers would:

- Share the purpose of the review.
  - Compare the school program with the quality criteria to determine the effectiveness of the instructional program.
  - Recognize the program's strengths.
  - Make suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program.
- Alert staff members to the procedures that will be followed.
  - Observation in each classroom included in the review, including informal discussions with students and staff members and review of students' work
  - In-depth review of the instructional program received by a sample of students

- Group interviews with teachers, counselors, support staff, paraprofessionals, councils/committees, parents, and the district's office staff, as appropriate

- Review of curriculum materials, the results of the self-study, student achievement and other outcome data, schoolwide policies and procedures, and the school plan

- Report of findings and suggestions

The Case Study Approach

As previously mentioned, the secondary school setting is a complex one for students as well as staff. To facilitate the ease with which a clear picture of the students' path through school is obtained, the review team will include a small sample of students as part of a case study. Through studying the activities and programs of the selected students, reviewers intend to get a firsthand look at how all the elements of the secondary school setting come together for the student. From this vantage point the reviewer can determine what, out of all the programs have to offer, is actually received by the student. Further, the case study provides information on what effects the curriculum, instructional methodologies, and organizational strategies have on students' learning. And, finally, through these case studies the reviewer will be able to make some projections about how the student's total program will come together by the time of graduation.

Conversations with students who are part of the case study occur over the course of the review. They begin on the first day and provide an initial glimpse of the school through the language and experience of the student. As more of the program unfolds during the course of the review, the students will be called on again to offer additional information and perceptions to the reviewers. The object of these interviews is to learn as much as possible about the students' activities from the time they arrive at school until they leave, including extracurricular activities. Students are expected to describe daily activities rather than merely answer questions.

The reviewer will receive a copy of each student's daily schedule so that he or she can observe as many of the student's classes as possible during the course of the review. A general impression of the effect of the school on the student and the path he or she chooses can be formed from these observations. Additional information should include pertinent background information on the student, teachers' names, extracurricular activities, and other activities that occupy the student's time.

After the initial student interviews and during visits to the classrooms, the reviewer will continually relate what the student is doing to the program goals and objectives, course outlines, curriculum guides, and the student's own goals and future plans. During this process reviewers will again interview and continue to observe the selected students to help complete the picture.

Visits to the Classroom

The reviewers work with the school staff to ensure that all appropriate classrooms are visited and that resource specialist rooms, learning laboratories, media centers, and other areas where regular

and special learning activities occur are visited when appropriate.

Through classroom observation the reviewers gather information about how the curriculum, instructional methods, and organizational strategies operate in the classroom setting. Such observation can also provide insight into the effects of staff development, instructional support, and planning activities. On entering the classroom, reviewers should spend a few minutes observing what is happening, remembering that they are forming an initial picture rather than making a judgment; that each impression will need to be verified through further observation and informal interviews as well as through other sources; and that first impressions may be influenced by personal bias.

Questions that might be asked include the following:

- What are the students doing? Receiving instruction? Applying skills? Synthesizing and evaluating information? Waiting? Causing a disturbance?
- How is the classroom being managed? Is it conducive to learning? Academically focused? Is instructional time wasted?
- What is the range of activities--from acquisition of knowledge to higher-level learning skills?
- How is assistance being provided?
- How much time do the students spend on the assigned activity? Do they know what to do? Are homework assignments done in class?

- How do students apply the skills being learned?
- In what ways are students with special needs participating in the classroom activities?
- To what extent are instructional settings varied according to the needs of the student and/or what is to be learned?

NOTE: Classroom observation includes informal interviews with students and staff.

Interviews

The basic information gained through classroom observation is verified, clarified, and expanded through interviews, which help the reviewers understand the history and the essentials of the program.

By using what is known about the curriculum and instructional program thus far, reviewers can conduct both informal and formal group interviews. Examples of informal interviews include asking questions of the students and teachers in the classroom and talking with counselors and paraprofessionals, with students, with teachers in the faculty lounge, and so forth. Formal group interviews, conducted with teachers, departmental chairpersons, councils/committees, and support staff, serve several major purposes:

- Verifying information obtained from other sources
- Collecting information that has not been gathered from other sources

- Resolving conflicts apparent in information collected

- Giving opportunities to share past experiences, current perceptions, or future plans that might otherwise remain unknown

- Offering an opportunity to ask questions of the team of reviewers

The group interview in the secondary school setting allows the review team to discuss with similar job groups (e.g., teachers in the mathematics and English departments) the key issues of curriculum, instructional methodology, the students' paths through the courses offered, staff development, and the school improvement process. As in the individual interviews, the team should base its questions on what has been learned so far. The interview should provide evidence to verify or modify the team's preliminary views and extend its knowledge of the situation at the school. Group interviews generally are scheduled for 30 to 45 minutes; however, the interviews with the teaching staff should last an hour or more.

Documentation

Documentation helps to verify, expand, and clarify what is learned through classroom observations and interviews. The information in the school plan, self-study, and school performance report forms an initial base from which the review is conducted because these documents contain a broad sample of information about the contents and point of view of the curriculum, achievement results, demographic patterns, and other data. Reviewers should not pursue documents to establish that such recordkeeping exists but rather to develop an understanding of what the program is really like. On the other hand, a school should not create documents just for the review team but should share meaningful data, policies, and other records useful to staff and parents in forming the program and helping it to move forward.

Ongoing Discussion with the Principal and Key School Planners

During the review, several periods will be set aside for informal or formal discussions with the school's principal and the key planners. These meetings serve to keep everyone abreast of:

- The progress of the review

- Areas in which information is incomplete or missing

- Scheduling problems

- Feedback on what has been learned about the program

In addition, the meetings provide an opportunity for the team to receive feedback about how the review is being perceived by the school community and to receive additional information.

Ongoing Meetings of the Reviewing Team

Throughout the review the reviewers must meet frequently. Several periods that have been found to be most productive for the reviewers to meet are:

- At midday, when reviewers touch base with each other, sharing what has been learned

- Before group interviews, when reviewers determine questions to be explored and issues to be raised

- At the end of each day of the review, when reviewers discuss findings of quality and suggestions for those aspects of the program needing no further clarification and design strategies for collecting additional information or resolving conflicts in information

- Before the development of the report, when reviewers meet with the principal and key planners to (1) prepare findings as to quality and suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program; and (2) determine the roles for the report to be made to the principal and key planners

Development of Report of Findings with the Principal and Key Planners

On the last day of the review, after all observations and interviews have been completed, the review team will meet with the principal and the same group of key planners who attended the meeting held to prepare for the review. The objectives of this meeting are to:

- Report findings and general suggestions.

- Select which of the suggestions will be developed into assistance plans.

- Develop collaboratively the selected suggestions into assistance plans. Do so by using details specific to the school and its planning and implementation processes and by identifying appropriate resources.

- Plan the best way of presenting findings to the entire staff

After the meeting, the report of findings and suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program are presented to the assembled school community. A description of that report is contained in Chapter III of this document.

CHAPTER II: APPLICATION OF THE QUALITY CRITERIA

Introduction

The criteria used for judging the quality of the program are focused on the curriculum, instructional methodologies, and effectiveness strategies and their effects on students, and each criterion contains features of a high-quality program. The quality criteria are designed for use with the review procedures enumerated in this document. The reviewer's job is to determine to what extent each aspect of the program being reviewed fits the description of a high-quality program.

The quality criteria are located in Appendix A of this document.

Common Themes of the Quality Criteria

Reviewers will note that while each criterion focuses on a specific part of the program, common themes run through each of the sets of criteria. In applying the curricular criteria, reviewers will observe instruction, review students' work, and talk to students and instructional staff members in order to determine for each curricular area being reviewed:

- What constitutes the curriculum, including:
  - What the core curriculum is and what other courses are available to the students
  - What is being taught
  - What students are learning
- To what extent lessons and assignments, including instructional strategies, material, media, equipment, and so forth, are appropriate to:
  - The curriculum to be learned
  - The needs of the students
- To what extent lessons and assignments:
  - Extend beyond rote learning of facts to the acquisition and application of the concepts, ideas, and issues behind the facts.
  - Utilize the integrated skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, computing, and learning in acquiring knowledge of the curriculum.
  - Challenge all students to think and communicate their thoughts.
  - Enable students with special needs to succeed in the core program.
- To what extent teachers are supported through staff development activities and their department's and school's administrators

In applying the schoolwide criteria, reviewers will be talking to staff members, observing them at work, observing the interactions among staff members

and students, and observing the operations of the school program to determine schoolwide effects on learning:

- The extent to which the culture of the school is centered on the pleasure and importance of learning
- The degree of alignment of the allocation of human and material resources, including staff developmental efforts, with curriculum and instructional goals
- The extent to which the school is engaged with the parents and the [illegible]r school community in common support of [illegible]hool's and community's goals
- The presence of an improvement process in the learning culture that is promoted by management practices and supported by policies and resources

Applying the Quality Criteria

The quality criteria determine the conduct of the entire program review. They guide the members of the review team as they observe instruction and other students' and staff's interactions on campus; as they talk to students, staff members, administrators, and parents; and as they review curriculum materials, students' records, the school plan, and so forth. Throughout the whole of the information gathering process, the criteria are used to determine what will be observed, shape the questions to be asked, and identify the documents and records to be reviewed.

When the reviewers have learned enough about the program to know what it is, how it works, and how it affects the students, the quality criteria become the standard against which the program and its effect on students are compared. Out of this comparison come (1) the recognition of the strengths of the program (that is, when a particular element of the program is found to match the discipline in the quality criterion); and (2) identification of areas within the program that could be improved.

The quality criteria are used not only to identify the program areas or elements that could be improved but to provide a direction and some initial ideas for the school's improvement efforts. To develop suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program, the reviewers are encouraged to draw on the model curriculum standards and the curriculum frameworks and handbooks issued by the State Department of Education, in addition to local curricular resources.

Cautions About Applying the Quality Criteria

No matter how well-designed the procedure or how well-prepared the reviewer, difficulties in judging program quality will always arise. Examples of errors made by reviewers are as follows:

Too general. The review is limited to a sample of situations for a given period of time, curriculum, group of students, and so on. To conclude that this limited sample is typical is to generalize incorrectly. To avoid this mistake, the reviewer must also relate current work to samples of past work. The observed activities and students' work are discussed with the student or the teacher or both, and explanations of how the activities or

assignments fit in with the overall program for the course are asked for.

Finally, observations in the various classrooms should be related to schoolwide programs and plans for programs. Reviewers should discuss this relationship with teachers and counselors, with people active in planning, and with the departmental chairpersons, other school leaders, and the principal. By fitting observation and explanation together in this way, it is possible to construct a historical picture of the school program and link it with student experiences. It is this picture and the link to students that provide the framework for generalizing from specific observed data.

Considering all students. In judging the extent to which each aspect of the program matches the standards of the quality criteria, reviewers must consider all students affected by that program. When virtually all students receive curriculum and instruction as described in the quality criterion, that aspect of the program is recognized as of high quality. If, however, a specific set of students is receiving curriculum and instruction of a lower quality than that described in the criterion, the reviewing team should recommend ways to improve the quality of instruction for those students.

Too impressionistic. Although initial impressions are a valuable guide for pursuing a line of investigation, they should be validated by careful examination of appropriate evidence. This evidence should include teachers' and students' explanations, students' work, or classroom observation. Initial impressions can be based on situations that are not typical of the school, and reviewers are cautioned not to let these impressions color the review.

Too analytic. The reviewer should limit his or her efforts to gathering information. This approach can lead to collecting data for its own sake rather than looking for the qualitative effect on the program. Reviewers should give the school an opportunity to disclose itself in its own way. Reviewers should therefore spend some time in contemplating what they observe about the atmosphere and tempo of life at the school.

Personal bias for or against specific materials or programs. Reviewers should keep in mind that what works or does not work in one situation may or may not work in another. Reviewers should observe how a program works at the school being reviewed, rather than concentrate on how it might work or did work at their own school. That a program succeeded or failed at the reviewer's school is irrelevant.

False positive. A false positive occurs when a school staff doing a poor or mediocre job is noted by the reviewer as doing a good job. When this mistake is made, the incentives for improvement are undermined; and the arguments for maintaining the status quo are reinforced.

False negative. A false negative occurs when a school staff doing an effective job is noted negatively by the reviewer. Although this mistake can be most upsetting, it may not be as bad as the false positive. Schools that are found to be effective but not up to the quality criteria are often upset that they did not receive all commendations. In many cases these schools are strong enough and confident enough in their self-study to brush off the effect of a false negative. In some cases, however, especially in schools that have made progress in developing effective programs, a false negative rating can be demoralizing.

Reinforcing facades. Overattention to the technology and procedures of program reviews may subvert the intended effects on education and create a fair but expensive and wasteful game. Although concern for fairness is very important, it is less important than concern for the real task of educating students. Some school and district personnel complain that trying to do well in the program review forces them to waste time building facades instead of teaching the students. Reviewers should not reinforce the building of facades in schools that want to do well. They should concentrate not on the paraphernalia of instruction but on how well students are learning.

CHAPTER III: REPORT OF FINDINGS

Overview of the Report of Findings

The information gathered by the team of reviewers at the site, their best judgments about the quality of the curriculum and instruction, and suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program are communicated in two phases:

- During the development of the report of findings with the principal and key planners, the team recounts its findings, plans the best way to present these findings to the staff, and collaborates on the development of selected suggestions into assistance plans.

- The report of findings is presented at an open meeting of the staff, district representatives, parents, and community members. It conveys the results of the diagnosis of the school curriculum and instructional program, including a description of areas of program strength and suggestions for improving the effectiveness of the program and assistance plans.

This two-phase sequence of reporting helps ensure that:

- The diagnosis of the program's quality will be presented in such a way as to encourage improvement at the school.

- The suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program are appropriate and likely to yield positive results.

- The assistance plans will be complete and fully understood by staff and reviewers.

- The school planners will become actively involved in the review and improvement efforts so that they may use similar methods when other curriculum areas are to be reviewed within the school's self-review process.

What the Report of Findings Includes

The report is both a written and oral presentation and is delivered at the conclusion of a program review. It grows out of everything the team has learned about the school program and its impact on the students and is shaped by a discussion of the review's findings between the review team and the principal and key planners. The report is the means by which the findings and plans are made known. It is the most critical element of the entire process of review.

The report communicates the three major elements of the review:

- The results of the diagnostic review of the school's curriculum and instructional program and the effects on the students

- The assistance plans for improving the effectiveness of the planned program, including the resources available for supporting the plans

- The review process as a model for collecting and analyzing information about the planned program in a way that results in improvements in the effectiveness of the curriculum and instructional methodologies

These elements are woven together to provide information to the school as to how the effectiveness of the program can be sustained or increased.

A successful report of findings is a stimulus for continuing program improvement. It confirms and extends the knowledge that staff and parents have about their program and assists the school in gathering and organizing resources supportive of the school plan for improvement.

How the Report Is Developed

The report of findings is prepared while the program review is being conducted because the report is based on all the information the team and the school planners have gathered through observation, interviews, and reviews of documents.

Conferences of the review team members, held throughout the review, form a basis for the report. A picture of the school emerges from these conferences as the reviewers:

- Review what they know about the program, identify areas that require more information, and plan strategies to collect it.

- Review the school plan and other documented information gathered during the visit.

- Compare information collected with each of the quality criteria being applied.

- Identify areas of program strength.

- Identify potential areas for suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the program while recognizing the school's own improvement process.

- Identify local and regional curricular resources so that specific suggestions may be developed and coupled with assistance plans.

- Decide on the order of the preliminary report to the principal and key planners; the manner in which the discussion is to be guided and by whom; and the responsibility each reviewer will take.

During the development of the report of findings with the principal and key planners, the reviewing team presents what it found when it compared what it had learned about the program and its impact on the students with the quality criteria. Questions about these findings will be answered, and information will be verified. In addition, the diagnostic portion of the report of findings and suggestions will be framed. The collaboration of the principal and key planners is essential in producing suggestions that are meaningful and likely to produce results and in providing a bridge between the review team and the rest of the school community.

It is important for all involved to recognize that the meeting called to present the preliminary report is a working meeting. After the major findings of review are shared and discussed and the team's recognition of the program's strengths and suggestions for increasing effectiveness are presented, the main task of the meeting can be addressed--determining which suggestions will be fully developed into assistance plans and which will remain suggestions. Then the assistance plans are developed. The completed assistance plans include proposed activities, strategies for implementation, resources needed, and ongoing planning and evaluation activities. Finally, these agreed-on assistance plans are woven into the report of findings as a working document to be used by the school to guide further improvement efforts.

The lead reviewer should conduct the preliminary meeting in a way that elicits involvement from school staff. Many schools will be knowledgeable about program review practices and procedures and will be ready to collaborate in the process. At other schools the key planners will want the team to assume most of the responsibility for reporting to the school and developing assistance plans. It is the responsibility of the lead reviewer and the team members to assess the readiness of the school's planners to participate in the report of findings and to plan activities in accordance with the abilities of the staff.

Framing Suggestions for Increasing the Effectiveness of the Instructional Program

Suggestions for increased effectiveness are framed by the review team as it compares what it has learned about the program and its impact on students to the quality standards in the review criteria (as described previously).

During this phase of the review, it is important for the team members to keep in mind that individual schools institute and support change in various ways. The design of an appropriate change or improvement process is critical to the success of the suggested effectiveness strategies.

In developing assistance plans from the suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the program, reviewers and the school's program planners identify activities that would:

- Eliminate or ameliorate conditions interfering with the implementation of high-quality curriculum and instruction.
- Have the greatest impact on the program and lead to improved effectiveness in many areas.
- Be best for moving into an area ready for improvement; that is, where staff interest and motivation are high, where there can be high yield for efforts expended, and where the scope is appropriate to ensure success.

The assistance plans should link the resources the school needs for change with the services available to provide maximum support for improvement. The resources should include not only those of the school itself but those of district, county, region, and state as well. The assistance plans grow out of the suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program and include the school's procedures for planning, implementing, and evaluating its program.

The Final Report of Findings

The report of findings is presented to the remainder of the school staff, parents, the district office, and community members. This report should be presented by members of the team and the school planners. Its purpose is to:

- Present the findings of the review to the school community.
- Provide the supporting evidence that contributed to the diagnosis of the program.
- Recognize the strengths of the program, including, where appropriate, areas of significant improvement.
- Present the suggestions for improving the effectiveness of the instructional program and expand on the written statements by sharing the ideas and recommendations of the team and school planners on how the school staff and parents can use the planning/evaluation process for continued improvement of the program.
- Describe the assistance plans and resources that support the suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the instructional program.

The final, lasting impression made at the school should be that of a professional, clear presentation that recounts the diagnosis of the planned program; reports the findings of the quality review; recognizes the strengths of the program; and makes appropriate suggestions to improve the effectiveness of the school. Questions should be encouraged that clarify or expand on points made in the report. However, most of the discussion should have taken place earlier during the development of the preliminary report.

In presenting the oral report, the review team and the participating school staff members will:

- Emphasize that the review is of the total school program, with a focus on the selected curriculum areas.
- Explain what the quality criteria are, how they are used, and how they relate to each other.
- Recognize the effort expended by staff and others in implementing or in improving the program and in conducting the self-study.
- Present the findings, recognizing the program's strengths, sharing suggestions for increasing the program's effectiveness, and presenting the assistance plans developed collaboratively by the team and the key planners.
- Invite questions.
- Thank the school community for its hospitality.

In addition to presenting an oral report of findings, the team will leave the following written report:

- Summary statement of its findings for each criterion

- Statements recognizing the program's strengths or aspects of the school's program in which significant improvement has occurred

- Suggestions for increasing the program's effectiveness, including those developed into assistance plans by the review team and key planners

Follow-up to a Program Review

The "Report of Findings" is a significant portion of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the school's program for the purpose of modifying the school-level plan.

In School Improvement schools, the school site council (SSC) should take an active part in monitoring the follow-up activities that will grow out of the formal program review process and the report of findings.

The key planners should take an active leadership role in the implementation of suggestions and assistance plans.

The reviews are monitored by the State Department of Education, and the results are used to provide assistance to schools, school districts, and offices of county superintendents of schools. For follow-up assistance in implementing the suggestions for program improvement, school personnel should follow their assistance plans in contacting their district's resources, the office of the county superintendent of schools, the State Department of Education, private or public institutions, staff development centers within their areas, or whatever they decide would be best for them. External agencies should be aware that schools that have undergone an analysis of the effectiveness of their program, whether internal or external, are most receptive to suggestions for program improvement. However, decisions about who should help implement recommendations or modify the program rest with the school and district staff.

APPENDIX A: QUALITY CRITERIA FOR JUDGING THE EFFECT OF THE PROGRAM ON THE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT

This appendix contains the criteria for 15 areas to be examined during the review of a high school program. Each criterion represents a high-quality standard for a particular element or aspect of the program.

The program review quality criteria address the two major aspects of a school program:

- The curriculum; that is, what is being taught and learned:
  - English/Language Arts
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - History-Social Science
  - Foreign Language
  - Visual and Performing Arts
  - Physical Education
  - Vocational-Technical Education
- The schoolwide policies and procedures that shape and support instruction:
  - Students' Paths Through High School
  - Integrated Skills
  - Instructional Practices
  - Students with Special Needs
  - Student Services: Guidance and Counseling
  - Improvement Processes
  - Culture of the School

Each criterion contains a brief introduction that describes the central features of a high-quality program and a series of statements that further describe or illustrate the program.

The national educational reform movement has as its central focus the adequacy of a high school education for preparing students to succeed in three ways:

- Compete successfully in the marketplace of the next decade.
- Contribute as literate citizens to the survival of our democracy.
- Participate fully in the cultural, ethical, and political life of our civilization.

The major voices of the reform movement--Ernest Boyer, John Goodlad, Theodore Sizer, and, in California, Bill Honig, Superintendent of Public Instruction, among others--all speak of the need for substantive changes in both the content and the processes.[1]

These four leaders of reform agree not only on why there must be changes in secondary education but also on what those changes should be. The most fundamental of these shared convictions is the belief that a high school education should offer a common core of knowledge that all educated citizens should possess. This core, they maintain, is both utilitarian in that it prepares students for postsecondary work and study and altruistic in that it helps each student develop in character and citizenry.

The common themes of reform shaped through this nationwide movement for excellence in education have been captured in the descriptions of high-quality education contained in this document. The themes that are included in the criteria are of three basic kinds and have to do with (1) curriculum or what students are expected to learn; (2) students and the teaching and learning processes in the classrooms; and (3) the organization and the culture of the high school.

The Curriculum

There is a common core of knowledge that all educated citizens should possess. By opening vistas for students into the broad achievements and issues of civilization, this core will empower the students to participate in and benefit from a higher-quality life. This core includes cultural literacy, scientific literacy, knowledge of the humanities, and appreciation of the values that undergird our society. In addition, through this core curriculum, students should develop fully the skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, calculating, and learning and the ability to think critically. All students should have access to the core curriculum. Most students are expected to succeed in this rigorous academic curriculum.

As students proceed through high school, care is taken to ensure that the paths they choose are directly related to their career, personal, and social goals; that bridges exist to help students move from one path to another as they mature and develop through their high school years; and that students are able to take the necessary prerequisite courses for their chosen paths.

Vocational education courses complement and reinforce this academic core; they provide alternative paths through the core in which the content is comparable to core courses. In addition, vocational education courses make students aware of different career options, help students evaluate various career choices, and prepare them to select a career.

Students and Instruction

Students are engaged in their learning tasks. There is an emphasis on active, lively learning, with students discussing, questioning, and exchanging ideas; working at creating, constructing, and producing projects that give depth and significance to the curriculum; and using concrete materials and original source documents. Teachers use questioning techniques to encourage students to extend their thinking and articulate their reasoning. The subjects of history, literature, and science are used to engage students in discussions of events and ideas, in reflections about their own lives, and as links to other curricular areas. Teachers recognize the need for students to become independent learners; they take into account the knowledge students bring to each learning situation, build on it, and challenge the students to apply what they know in new situations while they steadily increase each student's own responsibility for learning.

Students with special needs--limited-English-proficient, educationally disadvantaged, and gifted and talented students as well as students receiving special education instruction and services--have access to the core curriculum. The special services students with special needs receive support their success in the core curriculum. When remediation is required, instructional strategies are modified; or alternative learning settings (other than pull-out programs) are developed so that students are successful in learning the regular curriculum. The regular curriculum is not replaced by a diluted, simplistic, remedial curriculum. Each professional staff member acknowledges and accepts his or her responsibility for the students with special needs, including the students at risk of dropping out of school. Staff members help students build a bridge to alternative learning settings and back again as appropriate to the student's career goal path.

[1] For a sample of the work of these four educational reform movement leaders, see:

Ernest L. Boyer, High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America. New York: Harper and Row, 1983.
John I. Goodlad, A Place Called School: Prospects for the Future. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1983.
Bill Honig, "The Educational Excellence Movement: Now Comes the Hard Part", Phi Delta Kappan Vol. 66 (June, 1985), 675.
Theodore R. Sizer, Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1984.

The Organization and Culture of the School

The principal, vice-principals, and departmental chairpersons are knowledgeable about and provide guidance in curriculum and instruction. Their focus is on professional educational issues rather than the management of the day-to-day functioning of the school. Time is recognized as a precious commodity, with meeting time spent on educational issues rather than on housekeeping matters.

The departments work as a collegial organization, with teachers conferring about students, planning together, and sharing curricular information and instructional techniques. Teachers find their experience at school professionally rewarding. Staff development activities help teachers expand their curricular knowledge and refine their instructional techniques through effective adult pedagogy.

Teachers and administrators believe that every student can develop morally, intellectually, culturally, and emotionally to his or her potential. They further believe that an educated society is the sine qua non of a democracy. These fundamental beliefs are evidenced in how they care about their students, what the students are and are not learning, and how they are developing; how they work together, plan and conduct instructional activities, and carry out schoolwide activities; and how they communicate with students and among themselves. They are committed to high-quality education for all students, working at program improvement as individuals, collectively as departmental members, and as a total school staff. Throughout the school there is open, candid recognition and discussion of the problems of the school on the part of staff members and collective and collegial efforts to eliminate the problems in order to increase the effectiveness of their school program.[2]

These themes or attributes of a high-quality high school program emerge and re-emerge in the criteria contained in this Secondary School Program Quality Criteria document. The 15 criteria include eight curriculum standards and seven schoolwide standards. The criteria for English/language arts, mathematics, science, history-social science, foreign language, and visual and performing arts reflect the major foci of the model curriculum standards for each curriculum area adopted by the State Board of Education in January, 1985. In the self-study conducted prior to a program review, staff members are expected to use the model curriculum standards in addition to these program review criteria in order to analyze the current effectiveness of each curriculum area.

Although these criteria were developed for the program review process, their greatest value to a school lies in their use in analyzing the various aspects of the school's program. Because the criteria are high-quality standards, they represent the standards toward which school staff members should be striving as they work to improve the quality of education experienced by their students. Staff members in all high schools should find these standards essential in setting program quality goals, for use as a yardstick in measuring progress toward those goals, and for use as indicators of direction for improvement. The secondary school program quality criteria should receive their greatest use as tools for planning program improvements.

[2]Sara Lawrence Lightfoot, The Good High School: Portraits of Character and Culture. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983.

The English-language arts program plays an important role in developing the ability of all students to communicate in the English language and to think critically.

Students gain English language proficiencies by reading a central core of literary works that focuses on the significant issues of humanity. The skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are developed in context through a meaningful study of these enduring works. Students use their language arts skills to comprehend and develop the ideas and values that these works embody.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

Curriculum

The English-language arts curriculum is comprehensive, systematic, and developmental. The curriculum is organized around a central core of literary works selected from among the great essays, poems, short stories, novels, biographies, dramas, folktales, and speeches that preserve and embody the diverse cultural heritage of the United States. English teachers use literature both (1) as the medium for teaching the fundamental human, ethical, cultural, and political values that underlie our society and connect us as human beings; and (2) as the means for teaching the processes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing at all grade levels. The curriculum is developmentally sequenced so that all students gain an increased understanding of the works of literature that are studied and so that they become better prepared to read and comprehend similar works on their own.

Literature

The literature curriculum has three parts, encompassing a core, an extended, and a recreational/motivational reading program. The core program consists of those works that are intensively studied by all students, including those students with special needs; the teacher varies the manner in which the works are studied for special needs students. The extended program consists of additional works which supplement the core program and are appropriate to students' special interests and needs. The recreational/motivational reading program develops positive reading habits of students and the concept that reading is pleasurable and rewarding. Students who are not proficient in English are provided the same or, if unavailable, analogous selections in their primary language, or they experience the content in other instructional modes (e.g., audiovisual supplements, sheltered instruction, and so forth).

Integrated Program

Students regularly respond to literature through interrelated instruction in the processes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four processes are integrated in a total learning program that emphasizes higher order thinking skills. Students learn to read with understanding, listen with purpose, write in their own style, speak with influence, and handle the conventions of standard English--all within the context of studying the central issues embodied in literature. Students come to value the processes of language as tools for clarifying, expressing, and learning new ideas in all curricular areas. They use language to help them acquire and apply more complex thinking skills across the curriculum. Language processes are integrated through direct instruction, cooperative small-group activities, and independent activities.

Reading as a Process

Students read extensively in a variety of genres. Through the reading process, students move into, through, and beyond literary works; they are inspired to interact with the works, explore and ask important questions, and apply the meanings of the works to their own lives. Through this process, all students at all levels are afforded opportunities to experience good literature, interact with the works, and engage in critical thinking and questioning.

Writing as a Process

Students learn to write clear, cogent, concise prose connected to the literary works they study. They experience writing as a process which embodies several stages, including prewriting, drafting, receiving responses, revising, editing, and post-writing activities, including evaluation. They are encouraged to give attention to developing fluency before attending to formal correctness. Students participate in writing activities which encompass a variety of purposes, audiences, topics, forms, and modes of discourse. Students show greater sophistication in their writing as they mature; their writing reflects their growth in the use of higher-level thinking processes, including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Listening and Speaking

Students interact with teachers and peers, in both teacher-directed and student-centered oral language activities, to share their reactions and ideas about their readings and writings. They learn strategies for synthesizing and integrating their reflections on what they hear and read into their own speaking and writing. Teachers direct students' attention to examples of rich and powerful language and offer opportunities for students to experience and

discuss language use. Students demonstrate increased facility for oral presentations at each grade level.

Evaluation

Evaluation of students' strengths and progress in the language arts program is systematic and ongoing, and it includes a broad range of assessment methods. Evaluation reflects the purposes of the curriculum and includes (1) frequent self-assessment and peer critique of writing and speaking activities; and (2) teachers' informal evaluations of students' participation and achievement related to both individual and class objectives. Data on students' performance are collected, along with data on the quantity and type of work accomplished. Feedback is provided regularly to students and parents through test scores, grades, conferences, peer critiques, and awards, and other forms of recognition. The performances of various types of students with special needs are monitored in relation to specific areas of the curriculum. Evaluation data support modifications in the instructional program at the classroom, department, and school levels.

Program Support

All students have access to a wide range of literature through the school's library; they are assisted by a librarian in selecting and using an extensive and current collection of print and nonprint materials. Students use technology; e.g., computers and audiovisual media, as a resource for (1) discovering new information; (2) storing information; (3) composing; (4) practice and learning; and (5) sharing information, ideas, and their own oral, written, and visual expressions with others. Courses are offered for students who want or need to gain greater proficiency in English for postsecondary education or career goals. Supplementary services, including those for students with limited-English proficiency, provide language arts instruction which helps students to comprehend, respond to, and appreciate core works of literature and helps them to become more fully aware of human issues.

Departmental Activities

Teachers interact with each other regularly at departmental meetings designed to provide staff development and program renewal. Curriculum and instruction are implemented consistently across all sections of the same course. Each teacher is committed to a systematic program that emphasizes progressive proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The chairperson and teachers periodically evaluate the program to determine how well the instruction achieves substantial literacy for all students; the development and integration of writing, comprehension, and speaking; and the contextual acquisition of vocabulary and technical skills. The principal and departmental chairperson often interact to develop plans and promote activities that support departmental efforts for teachers to grow professionally.

Exemplars

- All students complete four years of English-language arts courses in which they systematically develop their ability to read, write, listen to, and speak the English language and become more knowledgeable about their cultural heritage through reading literature.
- The core program includes works of literary merit that:
  - Have been selected carefully by curriculum planners and selection committees at school and district levels.
  - Are studied in depth by all students.
  - Are experienced by students through close reading, hearing them read aloud, or seeing them performed.
- The extended program consists of works of literary merit that:
  - Have been selected by curriculum planners and selection committees.
  - Students read on their own or in small groups to supplement the classwork carried on under the core program.
  - Are broad enough to permit teachers to recommend titles which are appropriate to the special interests, needs, and abilities of their students.
  - Are related to the core program through themes, historical settings, types of characters, locations, curricular topics, or works of a particular author or illustrator.
- The recreational/motivational program consists of titles of literary merit that:
  - Are readily available in classroom, school, and public libraries.
  - On the recommendations of teachers and librarians, students read on their own for enjoyment and enlightenment.
- Teachers focus attention on the central human issues raised in literary works of the world in lessons that:
  - Challenge the students to achieve greater understanding of the issues and their importance to the human condition.
  - Develop the students' maturity in thinking about the issues and articulating their ideas about them.
  - Engage the students in a reassessment of their own values in relation to those values embodied in the literature.

- Original whole works make up the major part of the program rather than excerpts or watered-down versions of the works. Students:

  - Confront the complex issues in the literature through analysis and summarize the central themes.
  - Engage in comparing and contrasting activities.
  - Discuss various interpretations of the work and make inferences concerning the author's meaning.
  - Draw conclusions and make judgments.
  - Appreciate the techniques of effective expression in the literature.
  - Learn about structural components as well as characterization and point of view.

- Instruction guides all students through a range of thinking processes that are not based on the assumption that students must acquire one type of thinking before being able to progress to another. All students develop the ability to predict, interpret, compare and contrast, analyze critically, synthesize information, and evaluate, solve problems, and integrate meaning through comprehending and composing activities.

- Students show greater maturity in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking as they progress from the freshman to senior years of high school. Teachers make more rigorous and challenging demands and expect more sophisticated skills from the older students than from the younger ones.

- Teachers use heterogeneous cooperative learning groups as a key instructional strategy in the development of native and non-native speakers' language proficiency and mastery of the curriculum.

- INTO literature--Before reading or interacting with a literary work, teachers employ strategies to evoke the students' interest in the work and to connect them personally with it, such as:

  - Asking provocative questions about the work
  - Eliciting the students' related backgrounds of experiences and prior knowledge
  - Providing an overview or synopsis of the work
  - Offering biographical background about the author and other interesting historical and factual information about the piece
  - Doing an oral reading of a lively scene, showing a film, or using outside resources, such as practicing authors and other speakers
  - Beginning with familiar, simpler works which share common themes with the more complex work

- THROUGH literature--Students explore the work in depth through:

  - Reading and interacting with the work
  - Discussing the abstract ideas, concepts, and ideals encountered in the work
  - Generating their own interpretations and responses
  - Focusing on crucial quotations
  - Engaging in dramatic presentations by assuming the personae of characters
  - Making predictions about what will occur in the piece
  - Recording their reactions in literature logs
  - Making journal entries of quotations or problems confronted by the characters
  - Designing artistic visualizations

- BEYOND literature--Interaction with the literary work is followed by activities that help students pull their thoughts together to reflect on how the work relates to them and to society, such as:

  - Discussing and writing their reactions and insights
  - Reconsidering and reinterpreting their world views as a result of the work
  - Developing an illustration showing relationships among characters
  - Relating one piece of literature to another
  - Dramatizing the work
  - Reading parallel works among genres
  - Writing a new preface, a new ending, a change of scene, a script for readers' theater, interpretive questions, summaries, imagined interviews, or sequels

- Students write in many different modes of discourse:

  - Story, observation, autobiographical and biographical incident and sketch, poetry, dialogue, persuasive essay, report of information, drama, letter, memorandum, newspaper article, diary, narrative, legend, memoir, speculation about results or causes, remembered place, analysis, fable, myth, interpretation, lyrics, and problem-solution

- Students experience a writing program in which they engage in:

  - Prewriting activities in order to select a topic, identify the intended audience, and determine the mode, tone, and style of the writing
  - Drafting activities in which the students manipulate language to suit their meaning and purpose, organize details, and give evidence
  - Responding activities
  - Revising activities in order to clarify thoughts and ideas
  - Editing activities
  - Postwriting activities

- Students write to develop their own style. They are familiarized with word processing and other computerized writing tools. Students' writing is published in various ways the classes, school, and community.
- There are written standards and expectations for student writing which are known and used by all teachers
- Students develop oral communication skills and regularly take part in discussions, panels, debates, and speeches on topics related to the central human issues found in the literature.
- Students practice critical listening in a variety of settings (small and large groups and one-on-one situations) and learn to distinguish between the emotional and factual content of the messages they receive.
- Teachers model effective communication skills by reading and writing along with and in view of the students and by modeling listening and speaking skills throughout the school day.
- Assessment methods and materials are aligned with the current emphasis on substance and the integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- Teachers are knowledgeable in the use of holistic, analytical, and primary trait-scoring methods for written language assessment.
- A variety of measures is used in conjunction with classroom assessment to determine the quality of the language arts program:
  - "School Performance Report"/CAP data
  - Background and training of teaching staff
  - Quality and degree of use of the library/media center
  - Attitude of students
  - Quality of services for students with special needs
- Periodically, English teachers evaluate their program in order to determine the extent to which:
  - Students are becoming culturally literate.
  - Instruction and assignments integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
  - Students are improving in their use of vocabulary and technical skills, as evidenced in their writing and speaking.
- The school library contains an extensive collection of books and nonprint materials of high quality. Teachers and library personnel encourage and assist students to select and use a variety of resources.
- Students with special needs participate in a language arts program that is conducted in concert with the regular language arts program. They experience and discuss the same material and ideas as do the more proficient students.
- Specialized instruction in language arts is provided to students with specific interests or needs; the strategies support the core curriculum and provide (1) different modes of instruction, e.g., visual and auditory, cooperative and competitive, or primary language and modified or "sheltered" English instruction; (2) higher intensity experiences involving frequent feedback, practice, exposure to the teacher, and lower student-to-adult ratios; and (3) a greater variety of activities and resources than are normally available.
- English teachers meet regularly to ensure that their courses are coherent and developmental for students progressing through high school, that the courses meet university requirements for the college-bound, and that students are developing sufficient skills in English-language arts, in thinking and in understanding, interpreting, and appreciating literature.
- The principal actively supports departmental goals and efforts for professional growth for the faculty.

The following resource publications are available, at prices listed, from the Bureau of Publications, California State Department of Education, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95802-0271 (phone: 916-445-1260):

English-Language Arts Framework, K-12, 1987 ($3.00)
Model Curriculum Standards 9-12, 1985 ($5.50)
English-Language Arts Model Curriculum Guide K-8, 1987 ($2.25)
Recommended Readings in Literature K-8, 1986 ($2.25)
Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program, K-12, 1986 ($2.50)
Handbook for Planning an Effective Literature Program, K-12, 1987 ($3.00)
Practical Ideas for Teaching Writing as a Process, 1987 ($6.00)
Becoming a Nation of Readers, 1985 ($4.50)

The following resource publication is available for $10 from the University of California, Los Angeles, Center for Academic Interinstitutional Programs (UCLA/CAIP), 405 Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024:

Literature for All Students: A Sourcebook for Teachers, 1985

The ability to think mathematically is becoming more and more essential for all members of our highly complex and technological society. To accommodate changes in the way and extent mathematics is used, it is essential that students develop the ability to discern, conjecture, reason, invent, and construct; in short, that they be able to think mathematically.

The mathematics curriculum helps students gain this kind of mathematical ability first, by emphasizing basic mathematical concepts and second, by emphasizing higher-level thinking skills and problem solving as a process. Requiring a new intensity of study, the mathematics curriculum requires students to achieve a depth of understanding that enables them to know why as well as how to apply their mathematical learning.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The primary objective of instruction is to develop the students' mathematical understanding--the ability to discern mathematical relationships, to reason logically, and to use mathematics techniques effectively. All students master the major concepts and skills of each strand of mathematics: number, measurement, geometry, patterns and functions, statistics and probability, logic, and algebra. The curriculum is organized to enable all students to learn these concepts and skills. Teachers in the department are committed to developing in each student this kind of mathematical understanding.

The curriculum continually reinforces and extends the previously learned mathematical concepts and skills through problem assignments that require the use of these concepts and skills in a variety of new situations with real-world settings. The relationships among concepts and skills, both old and new, are stressed in all classes so that students can connect new or extended concepts to what they already know. The students experience mathematics as a cumulative, unified subject.

Students learn problem solving as a process and experience the rewards of arriving at solutions through their own efforts. The thinking skills of problem solving are highly valued by both teachers and students. Each student takes an active role in problem solving. They systematically develop their ability to apply mathematical knowledge, skills, and experience to resolve new and/or perplexing situations.

Estimation is taught as a regular part of the instructional program. Students use estimation as an aid in computation, in problem solving to evaluate the quantitative aspects of situations, and to test the reasonableness of their conclusions.

Teachers and students routinely use calculators and computers in the mathematics classes. Calculators are used to decrease the time students must spend on computation and increase the time they spend on concepts and problem solving. The use of computers helps students explore, discover, and create mathematical relationships.

The primary focus in each course is each student's understanding and applying concepts rather than his or her ability to memorize rules and procedures. Instructional methods require interaction among students and between teachers and students to communicate mathematical reasoning and understanding. Students experience the fascination and excitement that mathematics provides through practical applications. Such applications engage the student in situations that reveal the way mathematics is used. Students have practical experiences in applying mathematics in other disciplines.

Teachers use concrete materials and real-world applications to help their students understand mathematical concepts and relate new concepts to those already learned. Students' understanding of concepts is enhanced by their use of concrete materials.

Instruction in each course covers the content planned for the course and is flexible enough to address the learning needs of each student. The mathematical knowledge of the students is regularly assessed so that specific areas of difficulty are identified and retaught as needed. Students who learn rapidly are given assignments of greater depth and extent. Students' performance in all courses is such that later courses in a sequence can be completed without extensive review of previously taught content.

The mathematics program offers alternative sequences of courses. There are sequences for students preparing for college, for honors and advanced placement students, for students ready to go beyond eighth grade curriculum but not preparing for college, for students who have not yet mastered the seventh and eighth grade curriculum, and for students who need individualized work in the elementary curriculum. Placement and counseling of students are based on thorough and ongoing diagnosis, with opportunities for students to transfer into a more appropriate sequence as their needs change. Students who need more time to master core content enroll in course sequences that allow for it.

The mathematics department meets regularly to discuss, plan, implement, and evaluate its program. The teachers and chairperson often interact to coordinate departmental objectives and collaborate on achieving the objectives.

Staff development activities aimed at improving instruction and students' achievement are held periodically, and the teachers are personally involved in the improvement process. Professional renewal is valued and recognized. The principal and chairperson often meet to collaborate on ways they will lead and support the raising of mathematical expectations among faculty, students, and parents.

- Students are regularly encountering new and unexpected situations, such as problems that can be solved with previously acquired skills but are different from and more complex than problems they have solved before in their mathematics classes.

- Students demonstrate their ability to think mathematically by their competence in constructing and inventing mathematical solutions to problems. They learn to:

  - Formulate problems.
  - Find solutions.
  - Analyze problems and select strategies.
  - Verify and interpret solutions.

- Students demonstrate the ability to use the following problem-solving strategies:

  - Estimate.
  - Look for a pattern.
  - Write an equation.
  - Guess and test.
  - Work backward.
  - Draw a picture or diagram.
  - Make a list or table.
  - Use models.
  - Act out the problem.
  - Solve a simpler but related problem.

- Teachers create a classroom atmosphere in which students feel comfortable trying out ideas; they model problem-solving behavior and encourage students to explain their thinking during problem solving. Students are encouraged to solve problems in a variety of ways and accept solutions in many different forms.

- Teachers utilize concrete materials and familiar experiences to assist students' understanding of mathematical concepts, to connect their understanding about real objects and their experiences to mathematical concepts, and to gain direct experience with the underlying principles of each concept.

- Each student has a calculator available in his or her mathematics class. Scientific calculators are used for common tables such as those for roots and powers, logarithms, and trigonometric functions.

- Computers are used often for creating problem-solving aids such as geometric displays, organization and graphing of data, simulations of real-life situations, and numerical sequences and patterns.

- Teachers assign practical application projects that enable students to solve problems that exemplify the use of mathematics in the everyday world. Applications are derived from the area of interest to the students such as:

  - Sports
  - Auto mechanics
  - Scheduling
  - Architectural space planning
  - Voting and elections
  - Surveying
  - Navigation
  - Projections onto screens
  - Loans and credit
  - Retail inventory and pricing
  - Population and census

- Instruction in all classes is flexible enough to address the learning needs of each student; lessons and assignments are based on ongoing diagnosis and assessment of each student and are designed to enable all students to master the essential concepts of the curriculum.

- Classroom instruction includes whole-group instruction, cooperative learning groups and individualized instruction, teacher-directed remediation using alternative approaches, and horizontal enrichment.

- Homework assignments are designed to give students the additional exposure needed to master a concept through meaningful and creative experiences that supplement classroom activities.

- A program for students of the lowest competency is available that concentrates on the student's "number sense," his or her appreciation of the sizes of numbers, and the estimation of results to be expected from calculations.

- Students who are competent in the basics of arithmetic but who have learned little of the measurement, geometry, functions, statistics, logic, and algebra have a basic or general mathematics course concerned primarily with these strands available to them.

- Students who were moderately successful in eighth grade but are not prepared for a rigorous college preparatory Algebra 1 course have available to them an academically oriented alternative (mathematics A of the framework) that moves beyond eighth grade in all strands and keeps open the option of subsequent transfer to the college preparatory sequence.

- The first course in the college preparatory sequence is for students who are strongly prepared and motivated. Students passing this course are prepared to take further college preparatory courses with little review or reteaching.

- A senior elective is available for average and above-average students who will not take college preparatory mathematics as seniors.

- An applied elective course is available for students who have passed the minimum competencies but who will not take an academically oriented course.

- Calculus, if offered, is given as an advanced placement course.

- The development of the weakest students is monitored closely. They are given individualized help and encouraged to enroll in regular classes after succeeding in the remedial efforts.

- Regular meetings are used by the mathematics teachers to develop and coordinate the objectives of the mathematics program and collaborate on the implementation and evaluation of those objectives.

- Staff developmental activities are designed to improve mathematics instruction. Teachers are committed to delivering a high quality mathematics program and are supported by the principal and department's chairperson as they work to increase their skills.

Because of the increasing technological demands on our society, the role of science in the academic spectrum is continually being expanded, revised, and updated. Science has assumed a new significance in the lives of Americans, and all students should have the opportunity to develop scientific literacy.

Science students learn scientific concepts primarily by engaging in the scientific process. Science experiments help students internalize the content of science and give them an appreciation for scientific inquiry and problem solving.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The primary goal of the science program is scientific literacy for all students. Students develop scientific literacy by: developing interest and enjoyment in learning how things work and why things are; learning fundamental concepts of science and how the application of these concepts affects their daily lives; learning techniques of the scientific method to validate science knowledge; developing thinking skills for lifelong learning; and using attitudes and knowledge about science to live as an informed citizen in a scientifically developed nation. Students have a positive attitude toward science and take an active interest in science.

The science curriculum is comprehensive, rigorous, balanced, and sequential and is built on the concepts learned in elementary and intermediate schools. As students progress through the sequential curriculum, they encounter basic scientific concepts repeated at higher cognitive levels. Teachers understand this spiraling nature of the curriculum and work on the articulation needed to make the spiraling concept work.

Students learn the facts, terminology, laws, and theories of physical and biological science by engaging in the processes of science and problem solving through experiments and other investigative strategies. Students experience the connectedness of science content and the scientific process and are able to integrate the two.

The curriculum emphasizes experiential learning, and instruction is activity-based. Students learn by hands-on experiments that develop both the rationale and intuitive thinking inherent in science inquiry and problem solving. They have the opportunity to explore natural phenomena, formulate experiments to solve specific problems of their own choosing, and develop alternative solutions to problems. Active learning is both serious and fun; students are learning in novel, creative situations.

All students achieve the level of scientific literacy necessary for them to function in our highly technological society. They apply their scientific knowledge to current situations and to life around them and discuss the societal implications of scientific and technological advances. Students have regular opportunities for in-depth analysis of ethical issues and for discussions of attitudes and values as they affect science and technology. They realize that science is a human endeavor, and not a value-free body of knowledge.

Direct instruction, independent and small group laboratory work, science projects, and discussion sessions are used to develop the students' conceptual understanding of major scientific phenomena. This variety of teaching methods is employed for each major curricular objective as reinforcement and to take advantage of different students' learning modalities. Students are frequently asked to explain their own ideas about natural phenomena and formulate testable hypotheses in their own words. Teachers facilitate such discussions with open-ended and divergent questions so that the students expand their views and understanding as they explore the complex ethical issues in applying science to a technologically advanced society. The school's library offers a collection of science materials that support independent research projects by students.

While concentrating on the essentials of the science curriculum, teachers foster and maintain students' interest in a wide variety of topics by using stories of great scientific discoveries, biographies, and other high interest science readings. Teachers relate science concepts to the major ideas of art, literature, history, and mathematics. They draw on and develop alliances with the science resources found in the community: museums, universities and colleges, educational television, industry, science fairs and expositions, science teacher organizations, and military and governmental agencies. Field trips and science fairs are important parts of the science program and are used to maximize students' interest as well as achievement. Teachers encourage parents to provide science experiences for their children.

All students receive at least two years of science instruction that incorporates a balance of physical and biological sciences. Science programs are flexible enough for students to prepare for advanced courses in biology, chemistry, physics, and earth/space sciences. Students planning for careers in science-related fields take at least three years of science and three years of mathematics. If they are interested and able, students who take general life science and physical science are encouraged to take more advanced courses.

The science teachers exemplify high standards of scientific knowledge and teaching expertise. They are regularly involved in staff developmental programs aimed at personal renewal and improved competence in science education. Teachers regularly collaborate on curricular and instructional issues. The curricula of various

courses and grade levels are carefully articulated and sequenced. Staff is committed to students' mastery of the articulated curriculum.

Efforts to plan, implement, and evaluate the science program are coordinated within the department. Teachers regularly meet to share instructional and experimental techniques. The principal and chairperson regularly discuss the science program and its role in the school's total program. Administrative support of the science program is translated into updated and well-maintained science facilities, equipment, and instructional materials needed for a quality program.

- The science curriculum focuses on the content and processes of science through problem solving by experiments and other means of investigation. Students demonstrate their ability to integrate the content and processes of science by their competence in conducting experiments to learn science concepts. Science experiments put students in charge of their own learning.

- Students learn the basic concepts of physical science, including an understanding of:

  - Atomic structure, molecules, elements and compounds, and their properties
  - Phases of matter and the kinetic theory
  - Definition of measurement of physical characteristics
  - Chemical reactions and nuclear science
  - Force and motion
  - Energy sources, transformation, and conservation
  - Waves: fluid, sound, and electromagnetic
  - Heat and heat transfer
  - Electricity and magnetism
  - Geological processes
  - Water cycle, climate, and weather
  - Astronomy and space exploration
  - California land forms
  - Oceanography

- Students learn the basic concepts of biological science to include an understanding of:

  - Structure, functions, and interrelationships of cells, tissue, organs, and systems
  - Categories and roles of organisms in the web of life
  - Animal and human behavior, growth, and development
  - Plant functions, including the processes of photosynthesis and plant respiration
  - Reproduction, genetics, and theories of evolution
  - Ecosystems and ecology
  - Technological advances in medicine and agriculture

- The science teachers build on the students' previous science education. Spiraling of knowledge and skills is evident in the courses.

- The teachers emphasize experiential learning through activity-based instruction. The students:

  - Explore natural phenomena.
  - Organize the data collected.
  - Formulate experiments.
  - Develop alternative solutions.
  - Solve problems.

- Students have frequent experiences that develop their thinking, communication, and learning skills in science. These activities are open-ended, student-directed, and interdisciplinary.

- Students have regular opportunities for analysis and discussion of the ethical issues of science and technology. The discussions are based on an understanding of the scientific concepts and related to issues that students are interested in and care about.

- Teachers utilize community resources by forming alliances with:

  - Museums
  - Science fairs and expositions
  - Organizations of science teachers
  - Educational television
  - Universities and colleges
  - Industry
  - Governmental and military agencies

- All science teachers are highly knowledgeable about science, skilled in the scientific process, and are able to instill in their students a positive attitude about science and a desire to learn more.

- All students take two years of the biological and physical sciences as part of their core program. Included in the two years are concepts of earth and space science. The science department offers other courses for students who want more scientific knowledge.

- The teachers utilize staff development opportunities to keep current with scientific advancement and to refine their instructional skills.

- The departmental staff works together to evaluate the science curriculum and instructional methods in order to ensure consistency, coordination, and alignment among the courses and to plan programmatic improvements as needed.

- The administration at the school and the district support the science program by providing the facilities, equipment, and materials needed to implement a high-quality science program.

Participation in the affairs of our society, as individuals and as group members, is an essential component of citizenship. The development of students' citizenship for the present and future requires a knowledge of history and an understanding of the impact of the past on both contemporary times and the future. To prepare for this responsibility, students study and understand United States and world history, geography, culture, government, civics, and economics.

The study of history and social science, because of its interdisciplinary nature, utilizes skills from each academic subject area to gain insight, make evaluations, and analyze problems inherent in the broad spectrum of today's society.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The history-social science curriculum and instruction (1) vitalizes history as the link between past and present; (2) highlights the breadth of perspective by teaching students to experience history-social science through the mind and eyes of the historian, geographer, the economist, the anthropologist, the sociologist, the psychologist, and the humanist; (3) includes instruction in geography so that the critical role of the environment, location, resources, and demography can be better understood; (4) teaches the basic values and principles of our democratic, constitutional system and the pluralistic nature of our state and nation and compares it to other systems; and (5) promotes the acquisition of academic, civic, and social skills. The foundation of the curriculum is history: the narrative account of events and their development and consequences.

The curriculum of the history-social science classes provides a sound and broad-ranging knowledge base and is structured in a developmental sequence. Students are challenged to study seriously the major events, places, and individuals of history and governments in order to: (1) gain an understanding of the key ideas, concepts, and themes of the human experience; (2) recognize the central issues of the human condition; (3) make judgments about humankind and civilization; and (4) know what is essential to a good society. Aspects of world isolation and interdependence, the diversity of cultures and universal human experiences, and the dynamic and the static nature of human organizations are studied.

The curriculum and instructional activities and assignments engage the students in the lives and situations of the people and the times that they are studying so that the students feel a connection to the past and are able to examine and develop their own values in relation to what has been, is, and might be.

Through the curriculum and instructional activities and assignments, students are challenged to develop and demonstrate their creative and critical thinking skills. They learn to analyze critically the events, places, and individuals of history and governments according to established procedures of historians and social scientists. They demonstrate skill at organizing, interpreting, and synthesizing knowledge from a variety of sources and evaluating the content from an analytical perspective. The history and social science collections in the school's library enable students to research topics in depth.

The students demonstrate increased proficiency in solving problems and making decisions both in the classroom and in school that portend effective decision making at home and in the community. Teachers emphasize the importance of this practical application of history and social science by giving their students ample opportunities to apply critical thinking skills to problem solving and decision making in a contemporary setting.

The curriculum enables students to understand and undertake their responsibilities as citizens through experiences in class and in the community that provide knowledge of the world at hand and at large. Central to the curriculum are the basic American values of justice, equality, individual freedom, responsibility, respect for the individual, widespread public participation in governance, and constitutionally guaranteed rights of citizens. These principles of democracy are linked with an understanding of how our institutions function. Students learn the prerequisites of democracy and the origins and consequences of totalitarianism and tyranny. This primary focus is evident in the course syllabi, in the instruction taking place, and in the assignments completed by the students.

Teachers use a variety of appropriate instructional techniques to teach specific objectives, with an emphasis on interactive methodologies. The courses are interdisciplinary in conception and execution of the scope, sequence, emphasis, and methods of instruction.

All students take at least three years of coursework in history-social science as part of the core required for graduation. These courses involve the students in the study of United States and world history and geography as well as American government, civics, and economics, and include the interdisciplinary study of these subjects. Beyond the core courses, students can elect to take specialized courses in order to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of history and the social sciences. The total curriculum is coherently organized throughout all grades and avoids needless repetition. What is being taught in the classrooms corresponds to what is to be learned, as described in course of the study.

Evaluation is ongoing and includes students' performance, instructional objectives, and classroom interaction as well as long-range goals. The instructional methods and the content taught in the courses are adapted to the result of this evaluation. The school's leaders encourage faculty members to renew themselves professionally and provide the faculty with significant in-service opportunities.

- Teachers of history-social science courses design instructional activities and give assignments that develop the students' skills in reading, speaking, writing, listening, and thinking.
- Students, in each course, are developing the study skills, the critical thinking, and the social participation skills essential to learning history and social science. Students demonstrate increasing competence in these skills in the subject areas from the freshman to senior years.
- Teachers develop the students' knowledge and understanding of history and the social sciences in an interdisciplinary context by using such methods as:
  - Employing small group discussions, debates, and role playing to study issues
  - Developing the students' ability to use literature, drama, art, and other cultural expressions in their study of history
  - Coordinating assignments with other subjects
  - Requiring projects that utilize specific English, mathematical, scientific, and basic study skills
  - Encouraging the student to participate in local school government, in civic activities, and political issues
  - Using individual and cooperative learning projects
  - Assigning long-range projects that require students to research, interpret, and apply history and social science concepts
  - Assigning projects that challenge students to investigate and participate in current events that clarify historical and social concepts and theory
  - Studying the major events, places, and persons in history and government to gain an understanding of the key ideas, concepts, and events of the human experience
  - Using the community as a resource
  - Using computer simulations and data bases
  - Focusing the history-social science curriculum on the basic values of the American experience:
    - Social justice
    - Equality
    - Freedom and responsibility
    - Authority
    - Respect for the individual
    - Private ownership of property
    - Widespread participation in public policy
- Students are developing critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. They are able to:

  Define the problem:
  - Identify central issues or problems.
  - Compare similarities and differences.
  - Determine which information is relevant.
  - Formulate appropriate questions.
  - Express problems clearly and concisely.

  Judge information related to the problem:
  - Distinguish fact from opinion.
  - Check consistency.
  - Identify unstated assumptions.
  - Recognize stereotypes and cliches.
  - Recognize bias, emotional factors, propaganda, and semantic slanting.
  - Recognize value orientations and ideologies.

  Solve problems/draw conclusions:
  - Recognize the adequacy of data.
  - Identify reasonable alternatives.
  - Predict probable consequences.
  - Test conclusions or hypotheses.
- Students develop social participation skills by:
  - Taking the perspective of others; empathizing
  - Understanding multiple perspectives on societal phenomena
  - Examining concepts and feelings of self
  - Recognizing one's own biases
  - Seeing people as individuals rather than applying stereotypes
  - Balancing intellectual and emotional perspectives
  - Working in groups
  - Giving and receiving constructive criticism
  - Accepting responsibility and demonstrating respect for others
- All students take at least three years of history-social science that involve the study of:
  - United States history and geography
  - World history, culture, and geography
  - American government, civics, and economics
- Additional courses provide students opportunities to gain a greater understanding of history, the social sciences, and the humanities.
- The teachers and the departmental chairperson regularly evaluate the history-social science courses to ensure that:
  - The curriculum is coherently organized.
  - Needless repetition is avoided.
  - What is taught is what is contained in the course of study.
  - The scope, sequence, and emphasis of the curriculum and instructional methods are enabling students' learning and the realization of departmental goals.
- Teachers take advantage of staff development activities to develop or refine their knowledge of history, the social sciences, and appropriate instructional methodologies.

Students need to prepare themselves to live in a global society where foreign language skills and multicultural understanding are increasingly essential. The mastery of a second language, enabling students to communicate meaningfully in that language, is the primary goal of foreign language instruction.

Students develop the ability to communicate in a second language by continually using the language for communication both in and outside of the classroom. Students learn the language in a contemporary cultural context.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

All students have the opportunity to learn a foreign language as part of their high school education. Several different languages are offered, so students have a choice of languages to study.

The language curriculum is designed to motivate students to continue study beyond the first year. Students with previous foreign language experience can profitably take advanced classes and study subject matter in the foreign language in order to gain greater proficiency in the language.

The focus of the entire foreign language program is on meaningful and useful communication in the language. All classes in each language are taught with communication as the primary goal and the dominant activity. Instructors and students speak in the language to the maximum extent possible. Students have the opportunity to improve their listening comprehension daily; they read the language to understand what is written; they speak in the language conducting meaningful, purposeful interchanges; and they write in the language to send messages to other people.

Each language is taught within the contemporary cultural context of countries where the language is spoken, including the United States. Learning activities emphasize that each language is an expression of a particular culture or of several related cultures. Students learn that many cultural universals exist but that cultures vary and are of equal value.

The courses in each foreign language are proficiency-based. Specific proficiency levels are established and articulated for listening, speaking, reading, writing, and learning the culture of the language. Teachers incorporate these proficiency levels in their objectives for courses and lessons, and they regularly assess each individual student's proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and knowledge of the culture. Grading guidelines focus on the successful performance of communicative tasks over a sustained period of time. These guidelines are given to the students early in the semester so that they know how their performance will be evaluated.

The language department meets regularly to plan, implement, and evaluate the program. The teachers and chairperson often interact to coordinate departmental objectives and collaborate on achieving the objectives. Changes made in order to develop higher standards for the teaching and learning taking place in the foreign language classes are the result of regular evaluation of students' achievement, instruction, and the curriculum. The principal and chairperson meet regularly to discuss the role of foreign language instruction in the school's total program. The department has implemented plans that make foreign language classes more accessible to all students. The teachers are involved in foreign language training programs that help them develop their communication and proficiency teaching skills. The school's leaders encourage and enhance such staff development efforts.

- Foreign language is provided for all students at every readiness level. Advanced courses and subjects taught in the foreign language are available for students who studied the language in elementary and intermediate schools and for native speakers.
- Meaningful communication is the main goal and the major activity evident in the foreign language courses.
- Classroom language interchanges include:
  - An obvious purpose in communicating
  - Personal significance in the content
  - Resolution of uncertainties as a result of communicating
  - The cultural features of the language and society
  - The spontaneity and unpredictability in conversational communication
- Students are taught, in the receptive areas of listening and reading and the productive areas of speaking and writing:
  - Language functions
  - Structural differences
  - Vocabulary
  - Communicative and/or graphic signals
- Specific proficiency levels have been established for perceptive and productive skills, and means of assessment are in place.
- Students learn to understand and appreciate:
  - Cultural universals, the physical and psychological bases of cultural behaviors, and the unconscious ways in which they themselves prejudge behaviors different from their own

- The significance of special behaviors in target cultures
- Cultural skills in selected target culture contexts or situations
- Cultural connotations in selected key words and phrases, gestures, facial expressions, and other body language

- Administrators facilitate and encourage opportunities (language camps, travel abroad programs, students' exchange programs, and holiday celebrations) that integrate foreign language competency skills with on-campus activities.
- Departmental faculty members meet regularly to ensure a coordinated program that meets the needs of the students and the goals of the department.
- The regular evaluations of students' academic performance and proficiency, instruction, and curriculum have resulted in higher standards for teaching-learning in the foreign language program.
- Foreign language programs are accessible to all students.
- The staff development activities help teachers improve their methodological and language/cultural foreign language skills. The school's leaders actively support this staff development.

Exposure to and involvement in the visual and performing arts are crucial to the education of our youth. Each student's education can be considered complete only as it includes the personal development through participation in the arts, the knowledge of our artistic heritage, and the understanding of the societal values of art contained within the arts curriculum.

The visual and performing arts curriculum helps students make connections to our cultural heritage as well as our diverse cultural traditions. The arts curriculum prepares students to express themselves creatively through artistic endeavors and to develop appreciation of the arts.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The primary focus of the arts curriculum is to prepare students to express their creativity and to incorporate art into their lives. Students are enthusiastic about their participation in the arts and are motivated by the success of their own artistic endeavors. Instruction concentrates principally on practicing artistic operations, developing artistic skills and techniques, and creating artistic products. The courses concentrate on gaining the knowledge and mastering the skills and techniques needed to make creative self-expression possible. The creative activities in which the students are engaged promote personal insight, emotional satisfaction, and spiritual nourishment.

A secondary focus is to develop and refine each student's sensitivities to the arts and to enable all students to critically appreciate their own and others' performances and work through an examination of the standards of excellence for each area. Taken as a whole, the arts curriculum promotes lifelong involvement and appreciation of the arts.

The visual and performing arts department offers a variety of courses, at least one of which each student takes as part of his or her core program in high school. Other courses offered by the department are taken as electives by students who want more specialized training and appreciation of the arts. The courses educate students in four disciplines of the arts: dance, drama, music, and visual arts.

Each of the fine arts is taught with the rigors of a discipline containing its own body of organized knowledge. The total arts program recognizes the interrelationships among the four arts disciplines and between the arts and other subject areas.

In the art courses students are connected to their cultural heritage; they develop an understanding of themselves within the context of our common heritage and the diverse cultural traditions that make up our culture. The art activities and assignments help the students develop insights into other cultures and enable them to recognize universal concepts and values and to express their own individual values and ideals.

Instruction and assignments in the arts stimulate the senses and the emotions of the students by having them encounter the sounds, movements, and graphic displays of the visual and performing arts media and by having them participate in and learn to appreciate the performances and products of dance, drama, music, and visual arts. Students appreciate the arts as a means of nonverbal communication.

Teachers demonstrate their own artistic abilities and creativity in the methods used to motivate students to high-level achievements in the arts and in arts literacy. Experiential methods predominate, but other methods are used to highlight the arts as an academic discipline and to focus on the higher level thinking skills, including analysis, interpretation, evaluation, problem solving, and application associated with the arts. Community resources are used to enhance the total arts program. Practicing artists are brought into the school's program on a regular basis to interact with the students about their artistic works and the students' art.

The visual and performing arts faculty is organized to work as a unit. Coordinated program planning is an ongoing, regular part of the departmental effort to provide high-quality instruction in the arts. The faculty regularly evaluates the arts curriculum and implements changes designed to increase the number of students who are literate in the arts and who are skilled in producing and performing the arts. The teachers are involved in ongoing staff development programs in arts instruction. The leaders in the school work together to provide the resources necessary for quality arts instruction, production, and performance.

- All students take at least one visual or performing arts course as part of their core curriculum. The department offers courses in dance, drama, music, and visual arts.

- The visual and performing arts courses:
  - Teach a common core of knowledge.
  - Connect students to their cultural heritage.
  - Develop and refine students' sensibilities to arts.
  - Enable students to express their own creativity and experience moments of exaltation.

- Students, in developing a common core of knowledge, learn that:
  - Universal concepts are expressed throughout.
  - Artistic styles are influenced by social, political, economic, and technological events.
  - The arts are a means of nonverbal communication.
  - Both the western and nonwestern traditions have important styles.
  - The arts enhance and reinforce concepts and ideas in other subject areas.
- Students gain deeper insights into the role that the arts have played in the development and transmission of cultures throughout the world. Students learn that:
  - The arts reflect ideals and values of various cultures.
  - The arts contribute to the ceremonies and celebrations of the world's cultures.
  - A common culture can evolve from artistic contributions of various ethnic groups.
  - Their own values and ideals can be expressed through the artistic disciplines.
  - Culture is transmitted across generations through the arts.
- In developing and refining their sensibilities, students:
  - Develop and refine kinesthetic, aural, tactile, and visual sensibilities.
  - Learn to appreciate and enjoy works of art more fully.
  - Make aesthetic judgments.
  - Use higher order thinking skills as they observe unique interrelationships in art and nature.
- Students engage in creative activities that help them:
  - Learn to value their own efforts to think imaginatively through experiences in the arts.
  - Transform personal experiences into original artworks.
  - Engage in activities directed toward refining and mastering artistic skills and performance/production techniques.
  - Understand and appreciate the arts for lifelong involvement.
- Students have experiences with important works in dance, drama, music, and visual arts in the artistic, intellectual, and philosophical history of western traditions. Students also experience the arts of nonwestern traditions and thereby gain a better appreciation of other cultures.
- Students gain an ability to exercise judgment and discrimination in each area of the arts through an analysis of the criteria of excellence for that discipline.
- Students have ongoing opportunities to evaluate their arts performances, works, and compositions.
- Students' artworks are exhibited for recognition and appreciation throughout the school's buildings.
- Students engage in activities which promote their understanding of the arts for lifelong involvement, including the potential for careers.
- Teachers of the arts:
  - Teach the arts as an academic discipline.
  - Motivate students by demonstrating artistic abilities and creativity.
  - Employ experiential teaching methods whenever appropriate.
  - Use community resources, including practicing artists.
- A coordinated planning process is used to evaluate the fine arts program and to implement changes that will increase the effectiveness of the curriculum.
- Teachers participate in ongoing staff development in arts instruction.
- The necessary resources for arts instruction, production, and performance are secured through the joint efforts of the leaders in the school community, including parents and community members. Parents and community members also assist in securing the necessary resources.

Physical education is a vital element in a comprehensive, well-balanced educational program. The learning experience offered in this subject area can be a major contributing factor in the optimum development of an individual in all phases of life -- physical, mental, emotional, and social. The exemplary physical education program focuses upon developing in the student the ability to demonstrate good sportsmanship and socially desirable behavior as an individual and as a member of a group; providing each student with the knowledge and opportunity to work toward his or her maximum physiological development; motivating the student to maintain a high level of physical fitness and good health throughout life; improving the student's self-image; and providing knowledge and skills which can be used by the student in worthwhile life-time physical activities.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The physical education curriculum develops each student's physical fitness, sportsmanship, and self-respect; and the knowledge, skills, and values that support lifetime participation in fitness and sports activities. Students actively participate on a daily basis as an integral part of their secondary school experience. The program is well articulated; it is built on the concepts and skills previously learned, and as students progress through the curriculum, they encounter concepts and skills repeated at higher cognitive and physically more demanding levels. As a result of participation in this planned program, students gain a working knowledge of fitness, motor skills, and the value of attaining and maintaining a healthy body. At the same time, the curriculum is a conditioning program that develops the fitness of all participants.

Physical education activities lead toward achieving and maintaining optimum fitness. These activities are purposeful, sequential, and proficiency-based. Through direct participation, students learn and apply the terminology, facts, and theories of physical activity and fitness. Knowledge and application of these fitness concepts enable them to develop effective, personalized plans for a positive life-style that addresses cardiovascular conditioning, flexibility, relaxation, and healthful nutrition.

Students participating in the program develop a strong sense of self-respect. They are treated and expected to treat each other with dignity and respect, encouraged to put forth their best efforts, and are recognized for achievement. Students learn in a nonthreatening environment in which success is not dependent on athletic ability and the characteristics and values of good sportsmanship are taught and practiced, including the values of fair play, teamwork, striving, concentration, and winning and losing well. Students who have exceptional needs, including serious health problems, receive assistance and counseling that enable them to succeed in an appropriate physical education program.

The physical education program focuses on the establishment of lifetime habits and values, including a positive self-image, physical fitness, and sportsmanship. Students recognize that strenuous exercise has recreational, psychological, and emotional value and that healthful play is as important as productive work. Sports and games are valued by students and staff for the enjoyment they engender and the character they develop, as well as for the health benefits they provide.

Physical education classes are managed for maximum student safety and engagement in physical activities. Class periods are utilized effectively in order to allow time for purposeful activity, as well as preparation before and after the activity. Equipment and supplies are sufficient to allow maximum student participation, with a minimum of passive observation. Lessons are characterized by direct instruction, student involvement, skill demonstrations, guided practice, and pre-post evaluation. Teachers actively demonstrate and model the concepts, skills, and values they teach. Assignments are directly related to the planned instructional program and allow students to apply new skills and knowledge to what they know and can do. Teachers utilize a variety of evaluative techniques for determining students' individual skills and needs. Student achievement is compared to local, state, and national norms, as well as to the goals and objectives set by the student and the teacher.

Physical education teachers meet regularly to assess the quality of the curriculum and the effectiveness of the program and to plan improvements. Changes are implemented as the result of the ongoing assessment of student needs, student performance, curricular innovations, and professional research. Teachers participate in staff development activities that enable them to remain cognizant of and responsive to recent developments in curriculum and instruction, and are allowed and encouraged to participate in developmental activities which enhance their professional effectiveness. They also take an active role in schoolwide staff development activities, both as participants and as presenters.

Physical Education (cont.)

- Students experience physical education as a regular part of a balanced curriculum.

- Students develop and maintain a high level of fitness and wellness by:

  - Regularly participating in activities geared to individual fitness goals, including muscle strength and endurance, body flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, and an appropriate ratio of lean and fat body mass
  - Demonstrating knowledge of exercise components and scoring progressively higher than the 25th percentile of state or national norms on fitness tests
  - Learning CPR, basic safety rules, and procedures; and understanding the value of warm-up, conditioning, and cool-down in injury prevention
  - Undergoing periodic posture and body composition screening

- Students develop and maintain a positive self-image and exhibit appropriate social behaviors while participating in physical education by:

  - Accepting their physical characteristics, capabilities, and limitations, valuing their personal identity, appreciating the performance of others, making humane comparisons, and supporting the development of one's peers
  - Interacting with teachers and students in a positive, nonthreatening atmosphere, and identifying stressful situations and dealing effectively with them
  - Exhibiting democratic leadership skills and abiding by rules and regulations
  - Deriving enjoyment from both the struggles and successes related to participation in physical activity

- Students exhibit interest and proficiency in movement skills by:

  - Observing and participating in a wide variety of physical activities, including aquatics, dance, gymnastics, outdoor education, conditioning, sports, and special or modified activities, where necessary.
  - Utilizing available school and community resources for participation in extracurricular physical activities, including intramural sports and recreational activities.
  - Improving fine and gross motor skill performance.
  - Demonstrating transfer of learned skills and concepts from one activity to another.

- Students strive to achieve their highest level of physical performance by:

  - Forthrightly appraising their own progress and establishing realistic personal goals
  - Demonstrating perseverance, concentration, confidence, and cooperation
  - Expressing a sense of personal satisfaction and self-worth related to peak physical performance

- Intramural recreational activities and interscholastic sports are available to complement the physical education program.

- Academic instruction is integrated with other departments and includes offerings in:

  - Biomechanics
  - Physiology
  - First aid
  - Substance abuse
  - Health and hygiene
  - Kinesiology
  - Nutrition
  - Safety
  - History of sport
  - Prevention and treatment of injury
  - Anatomy

- Standards for student performance are written and communicated to all students and parents. Grading guidelines are based on department goals and communicated to all. Student profile information, as well as grades, is maintained to record progress from year to year.

- Students participate in physical education classes throughout their secondary school years.

- Instructional groups are flexible and relate to the instructional level of the students for each activity or academic area.

- Teachers employ community resources such as:

  - Doctors and hospitals
  - Educational television
  - Universities and colleges
  - State and national parks
  - Industry
  - Community leaders
  - Organizations of physical education teachers
  - Recreation departments

- Physical education teachers are highly knowledgeable about the subject area, understand learning theory, are skilled in instruction, and instill in their students a positive attitude about physical education and a desire to learn more.

- Teachers take advantage of staff development opportunities in order to refine instructional skills and remain abreast of recent developments in physical education curriculum.

- The departmental staff works together with administrative staff to evaluate instructional methods and curriculum in order to ensure consistency, coordination, and alignment among courses and to plan improvements in the program.

- The school and district administration supports the physical education program by ensuring that sufficient staff, facilities, equipment, and materials are available to implement a high quality program.

Vocational-technical education provides students an opportunity to explore, evaluate, and prepare for careers. Vocational-technical education complements and reinforces the core curriculum common to virtually all students.

Vocational-technical education is a continuum of well-planned, coordinated, articulated, and sequential education and vocational training experiences that prepare students for successful participation in the community, home, life, work, and college. It encompasses awareness of careers, exploration of jobs, vocational guidance and counseling, establishment of career goals, employability skills, development of personal skills, job skills' clusters, and general to specific job skills. It prepares individuals for job entry, job advancement, more advanced training, job retraining, and entrepreneurship.

Vocational-technical education in California comprises nine major subject matter programs: agricultural education, office education, marketing education, consumer and homemaking education, home economics-related occupations, health careers education, industrial arts education, technical education, and trade and industrial education.

Vocational-technical education has a dual purpose in its mission to benefit individuals as well as society as a whole. All students--males and females, the gifted and disadvantaged, the handicapped, and minority and nonminority students--have the right to select a career and receive education and training to make their goals possible.

Students whose career goals include employment immediately after leaving high school and who want to learn the skills and concepts required for an occupation have access to specific occupational training programs from a variety of sources: the comprehensive high school, the regional occupational center/program (ROC/P) associated with the school, the community college, adult education, and the community.

In applying the criterion for vocational-technical education, consider how the comprehensive high school, the ROC/P, the community college, adult education, and the community interrelate to maximize vocational-technical education opportunities for students. Consider also assistance given to handicapped students, students in nontraditional programs, pregnant students, single parents and homemakers, economically and educationally disadvantaged students, and to students with limited-English proficiency to help them succeed in their vocational-technical education courses and programs.

Students learn about various careers so they can make meaningful choices related to careers and develop plans for careers. They develop general employability skills that are necessary for success in a career and apply to successful living. Students have the opportunity to study occupational clusters, and they have access to vocational-technical education programs to learn the specific occupational skills and concepts required for employment or advancement in a particular occupation. Students' basic academic skills are reinforced throughout the entire vocational education program by applying basic academic skills to hands-on tasks.

Students are assisted in making meaningful choices about their careers through their participation in awareness studies of careers and activities that include examining the prerequisites and the characteristics of various occupations. The students prepare plans that address career goals, the course sequences leading to the goals, and other integral components of the students' educational programs, including participation in supervised community-based educational experiences and students' vocational organization activities.

Students learn general employability skills, including job interview techniques; interpersonal relationships with customers, co-workers, and supervisors; and work ethics such as punctuality, accuracy, neatness, and efficient and effective use of time.

Students have the opportunity to participate in the study of occupations in the areas of agricultural education, office education, marketing education, consumer and homemaking education, home economics-related occupations, health careers education, industrial arts education, technical education, and trade and industrial education. Students gain broad concepts of an occupational cluster, general skills, specific skills with wide application, and they acquire an understanding of the nature of work in the various occupations within the cluster.

The comprehensive high school, the ROC/P associated with the school, the community college, adult education, and community cooperate in providing students whose career plans include job preparation with access to an articulated occupational training program. In these programs students learn skills and concepts identified by practitioners and representatives of business, industry, and labor as those that are currently required in specific occupations.

Students reinforce their basic academic and critical thinking skills by applying theoretical concepts to practical tasks, such as the application of English language skills to writing business letters and mathematical calculations to diagnosing and repairing electronic components. Skills and concepts learned by students in vocational-technical education are used as an alternative way to satisfy graduation requirements in core academic subjects when they are comparable to those taught in academic courses.

Students in vocational-technical education programs progress through sequentially structured units of instruction and courses offered by the comprehensive high school, the ROC/P, the community college, and the adult school, and in community facilities. The programs are designed with objectives of performance and provide adequate duration and intensity for the students to accomplish their objectives. Teachers in the schools and employers in business and

industry understand the sequential nature of the programs and work cooperatively to ensure that the units of instruction currently taught in schools and the skills and concepts reinforced through community-based experiences coincide.

Students participate in learning activities conducted in classrooms and laboratories in the schools and in supervised learning activities in the community.

Students having difficulty succeeding in the vocational-technical education program are given appropriate special assistance to help them successfully complete the program. Students with limited proficiency in use of the English language may be helped by a bilingual tutor and with textbooks and written instructions in the language with which they are most familiar. Students with learning handicaps receive special assistance or remedial instruction. Other students needing assistance receive help to overcome the difficulty that prevents them from succeeding in the vocational-technical education program.

Vocational-technical education organizations provide students with the opportunity to develop interpersonal, leadership, citizenship, and occupational skills as an integral part of instruction. Students experience the democratic process in action and gain self-confidence by participating in both cooperative and competitive activities.

Vocational-technical education curricula are reviewed regularly by subject-matter advisory committees. The purpose of these reviews is to keep the programs pertinent to the workplace, to new and emerging technologies, and to the current labor market.

Vocational-technical education teachers are experienced in their occupational fields and keep current with changing technologies. The teachers meet regularly for formal staff developmental activities, for informal opportunities to exchange ideas and concerns, and for coordination in planning, implementing, and evaluating the program.

Each vocational-technical education subject-matter area lead person meets regularly with the school's principal to discuss the vocational education program and its role in the school's total program.

The administration of the school, the district, and the ROC/P support vocational-technical education by encouraging students to enroll in the program, making time available for the students to take the classes, providing qualified teachers, and providing students with access to adequate facilities that meet health and safety requirements, equipment currently being used in business and industry, and necessary materials and supplies for implementing quality vocational-technical education instruction. Such quality instruction is required for the students to prepare for the occupations of their choice.

- Students develop awareness of careers by making use of services and activities such as:
  - Receiving assistance in gathering and interpreting information on careers in the careers' center, in the classroom, and from guest speakers
  - Completing aptitude and interest tests for careers and having the results explained to them
  - Participating in exploratory and general work experience education programs, to realistically explore the world of work
  - Developing career plans, with the assistance of counselors and teachers, that contain immediate and long-range career goals
- General employability skills and concepts are interwoven throughout the entire vocational-technical education curriculum. Students learn job interview techniques and on-the-job interpersonal relationships in specific units of instruction in vocational-technical education courses. In all courses, work ethics, such as punctuality, accuracy, neatness, and efficient and effective use of time, are learned and reinforced during the daily activities of the course.
- Students learn concepts and skills common to a variety of occupations within an occupational cluster. Examples of skills common to a cluster are typewriting/keyboarding that have broad application in the clerical and data processing clusters of occupations and to other clusters as well, and blueprint reading that is applicable to a wide range of mechanical, construction, and design occupations.
- Students whose career goals include immediate employment on leaving high school have access to specific occupational skills training programs. The occupations for which the training is provided have a present or projected demand for new employees, and interest surveys indicate students' demand for the training. The skills and concepts learned by the students are identified by practitioners and representatives of business, industry, and labor as those currently required for entry into the occupation. The skills and concepts are expressed in performance objectives.
- The curriculum is arranged sequentially and presented to the students in a variety of methods, including:
  - Large-group instruction
  - Small-group instruction
  - Individual instruction
  - Laboratory work
  - Simulated job site work
  - Supervised occupational experiences at sites in the community

- Vocational-technical education students participate in the activities of students' vocational organizations that are appropriate to their occupational areas of study. The organizations are:

  - Distributive Education Clubs of America, DECA
  - Future Business Leaders of America, FBLA
  - Future Farmers of America, FFA
  - Future Homemakers of America - Home Economics Related Occupations, FHA-HERO
  - Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, VICA

- A subject-matter advisory committee, whose members include a practitioner and representatives of business, industry, and labor, regularly reviews the curriculum and makes recommendations concerning such areas as:

  - Curriculum content
  - Adequacy of equipment and facilities
  - Placement

- Vocational-technical education teachers:

  - Have adequate work experience in the occupation they are teaching.

  - Have professional preparation in the vocational subject in which they teach.

  - Remain current in their areas through activities such as participation in professional and technical conferences and workshops and by working occasionally in the relevant occupation.

- Each vocational-technical education subject-matter area lead person meets regularly with the school's principal to discuss the status of curriculum, facilities, equipment, and staffing, and to coordinate the goals and objectives of the subject-matter area with those of the total school.

- The administration of the high school, adult education, the district, and the ROC/P support vocational-technical education by:

  - Providing adequate vocational guidance and counseling services

  - Allowing appropriate vocational-technical education units of instruction to meet some of the core academic graduation requirements

  - Scheduling enough periods per day in the school for students to have time for vocational-technical education electives

  - Selecting vocational-technical education teachers who have sufficient and appropriate professional preparation and occupational experiences in the subject

  - Providing access to a properly equipped and supplied work station for each student in a facility that meets all safety and health standards

  - Providing necessary support services for special needs students in vocational-technical education

  - Providing teachers adequate time for any vocational-technical education program that conducts year-round activities

  - Providing teachers adequate time for integral activities that occur outside the classroom

  - Providing adequate opportunities for vocational-technical education teachers to participate in conferences, workshops, and other appropriate activities designed to help them keep current in their areas of vocational-technical instruction

During high school each student takes his or her own path through the courses offered. This criterion describes how these paths are constructed and the impact of the path taken on students' learning. Two fundamental curricula issues are:

- Does each student's path take him or her through a core of learning expected of all high school graduates?
- Does each student's path go beyond this common core through the courses and learning that enable the student to meet his or her goals and prepare the student for success in higher education and/or the work place?

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

All students achieve a core of common learnings that enables them to understand, participate in, and carry on the civilization in which we live. Beyond this common core, electives and specialized courses of study give all students the opportunity to prepare themselves for higher education and/or the work place. Students are enrolled in the most challenging and engaging sequence of courses that suit their different talents, needs, and aspirations; programs for honors, advanced placements, college preparation, vocational-technical education, general education, and remediation are available. Taken together, the core and the specialized courses provide a four-year path for each student to develop to his or her greatest potential and be prepared to achieve postsecondary goals.

The curriculum experienced by each student as he or she progresses along his or her path through high school is broad-based and balanced. In addition to the core curriculum of English, history/social science, mathematics, science, the fine arts, and foreign language, students are guided to take the courses that will prepare them fully for entrance into higher education and/or employment for their chosen career. Each course selected along the student's path challenges him or her to be an active learner, to apply what he or she is learning, and to synthesize new ideas and concepts with those previously learned. Students have alternatives for acquiring core skills and knowledge; there are different courses with comparable core content.

The students learn about a wide range of careers and what they must do to prepare for careers of interest to them. They are encouraged to set career goals and plan a path through school that will prepare them to achieve their goals.

Students are able to move from one path into another by way of bridges that invite them to cross over to more challenging paths. The school has definite procedures for identifying potentially capable and/or underchallenged students in the lower or average levels of instruction, and has developed support systems that help these students to achieve in higher level classes. Where appropriate, transitional classes are designed to help students to be successful in a more challenging environment. The scheduling procedures facilitate transfers into more challenging paths. Regular classes are being made more challenging so that all students will be better prepared to lead productive and satisfying lives after high school.

All students have equal opportunities and experience widespread access to quality instruction. Attention to equity and access is apparent in the design and implementation of the curriculum and in the scheduling process. As a result, all students have access to, and receive support for, success in the core's program. Students from groups underrepresented in college are encouraged to enroll in college preparatory courses. Regardless of gender, ethnicity, or handicapping condition, students have access to vocational-technical education programs related to their career interests.

Parents, teachers, and counselors help students set a path that aims toward their highest, most realistic goals. Students are able to discuss their program of studies, life goals, and career ambitions with their teachers and/or counselors. A schoolwide system of guidance facilitates such interaction and emphasizes the collaborative nature of the processes of course selection. Parents are actively encouraged to participate in the processes of course selection as part of the established procedures. The timeliness of taking certain critical courses is emphasized in the counseling of students and is known to the parents. Teachers, counselors, and students regularly evaluate each student's path to ensure that it is both comprehensive and balanced. Information gained from these evaluations is used to make needed changes in course offerings and scheduling. Students' placement is based on standard criteria and not just on personal judgments.

Students and parents are given timely, accurate, and clear assessments and advice concerning the students' learning progress. These evaluations are given to improve performance and encourage each student to attain his or her highest potential.

Students are encouraged to develop a four-year perspective and to clarify their goals accordingly. They understand and experience how what they are learning is interrelated. They feel that what they are learning is important to their lives now and in the future.

- Students and parents are aware that there is a common core of knowledge that the students will be expected to master prior to graduation. They see the value of this core of studies.
- This core covers the skills, knowledge, and values each student needs to be an active and productive member of our society.

- Each student has access to courses that fulfill his or her needs and talents, enabling the student to meet his or her goals for high school and beyond.
- Students experience a program that is continuous in concept and development of skills:
  - The courses' content is not unnecessarily duplicated.
  - The courses' content is part of a continuum of learning--no gaps in learning exist.
  - Successful completion of the courses leads students to the acquisition of the identified base of knowledge of the core curriculum.
- Students and parents are encouraged to consider more challenging alternatives that will promote broader career opportunities on graduation.
- The school has a process that enables students to take advantage of bridging into more challenging paths.
  - Transitional courses are readily available.
  - Students have high expectations for their careers and maximize the educational options available to meet these.
  - Programs are offered to encourage the students to explore expanded opportunities.
  - Students are encouraged to consider career goals that are nontraditional for their gender or background.
- Transitional classes enable students with lower skill levels to access higher level content.
- Students and parents have been made aware of the various options and paths available to them, based on the students' strengths and unique interests and abilities, and parents are actively encouraged to participate in the course selection process.
- Students have and take advantage of regular opportunities to discuss their various educational paths, life goals, and career ambitions with their teachers, counselors, and role models from business, industry, and labor.
  - The paths fulfill students' needs and meet students' goals.
  - Students are assisted by trained, interested, and concerned school-site staff.
- Teachers and counselors regularly review with the student his or her educational plans and progress toward them.
- Students understand how each course is an integral part of their own four-year program, and understand and experience how what they are learning fits together.
- The schools' personnel and programs focus on the students' personal and academic success. Students feel that what they are learning is important to them now and in the future.

INTEGRATED SKILLS

Integrated skills are those skills that students must develop and employ in order to master the content of the courses they take during high school. Skills and content are integrated by both instructors and students to achieve learning outcomes. These skills have departmental and schoolwide agreement, and skill acquisition and development are an integral part of all course work. Consistent application of these integrated skills enables students to master content of the courses.

The continued development and use of these integrated skills is a significant objective of the school, which recognizes the need of all students for lifelong learning.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

Students are developing and using the skills of thinking, learning, listening, speaking, writing, reading, and calculating. Written schoolwide policies and departmental implementation plans ensure that these skills are developed in all students regardless of the paths the students take through high school. Uniform expectations for development of skills are practiced departmentwide and schoolwide. All departmental plans specify the skills developed in each course offered by the department and describe how the skills are integrated in each subject matter area. Departmental plans set up a system that enables progressive and developmental skill training. Faculty members are implementing the departmental plans in each course syllabus.

As a result of this focus on these integrated skills, students in lower and average levels of achievement are able to move into a more demanding curriculum. An emphasis on integrated skills in the core courses in the first two years of high school gives these students both the skills and content needed to succeed in the more demanding curriculum. At the same time, strengthening the skills of the students in higher level courses challenges them to continually excel.

All students are expected to increase their thinking skills. Assignments require students to regularly use higher level mental processes that include analysis, interpretation, evaluation, problem solving, application of principles, and creativity. Faculty members continually model such skills, and the materials of instruction, the learning and teaching process, and the methods of testing reflect this emphasis on higher level mental processes. Schoolwide support for raising expectations for students' thinking is present; and parents, students, and community members understand and support the commitment to developing the thinking skills of each student.

Students receive regular feedback on their skill development progress. Time and effort are taken to extend the students' proficiency level in each of the integrated skills.

Students receive instruction and assistance in library and media use and learn how to access and use a range of information sources. The library offers ample collections of books that support extension of students' interest in the priority curricular objectives of the school, thus enabling students to explore and research in an in-depth manner. Libraries are open before and after school to encourage the maturation of students as independent learners. Libraries offer support services for teachers to integrate library use in regular assignments.

The faculty's in-service programs address the training needed by the faculty to become increasingly proficient in planning and executing objectives of skill development in their courses. Administrators and faculty members continue to raise their own levels of skills through both in-service programs and personal development programs.

- The specific skills integrated into the curriculum include:
  - Reading--Students extract meaning from printed material. The process requires decoding, comprehension, interpretation, and learning.
  - Writing--Students communicate ideas effectively in written form, with correct usage and spelling.
  - Speaking--Students effectively communicate ideas orally in different situations: one-on-one, small and large groups, public speaking, and dramatic presentations.
  - Listening--Students understand both the content and emotional meaning from the oral language of other people. Attending behaviors and active listening are necessary components of this skill.
  - Thinking--Students reason and reflect and use judgment to make effective decisions. Thinking involves knowing facts, comprehending the data, applying information to a particular issue, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating. Thinking engages the higher mental processes of problem solving, the application of principles, and creativity that enable students to relate what they are learning to the problems of day-to-day life.
  - Calculating--Students use numbers, arithmetically and algebraically, in both conceptual and practical applications and to understand the relationships and logic of mathematics.
  - Learning--Students gain knowledge and understand information in some systematic order and then use what is mastered in both an academic and practical life context. Learning is the continual discovery of better ways of acquiring knowledge and the ability to assess and use the knowledge. Learning requires the

effective use of study skills. Students are encouraged to examine the organizational and conceptual strategies they use to learn and are helped in becoming more effective learners.

- A schoolwide agreement that all students need to develop the skills of reading, speaking, listening, thinking, calculating, and learning and the teaching of these skills is part of every teacher's curriculum and instructional strategies.
- The leaders at the school ensure that these skills are integrated into the courses both in the instructors' plans and in the students' work.
- Each teacher within each department infuses these skills into all aspects of the curriculum, building on skills learned in a variety of other contexts. A cumulative advancement of all students' skills is present.
- The development of thinking skills is central to instruction:
  - Instructional materials include a higher mental process emphasis.
  - Instruction includes observations, reflections on observations, use of firsthand information and daily experiences, primary source material, and experimentation.
  - Students learn the nature of the subjects and the ways of thinking they represent along with factual content.
  - Instruction tends to be based on inquiry with higher mental process questioning.
  - Testing includes formative tests with feedback and corrections on higher mental process questions.
- Emphasis on these skills is especially evident within the core curriculum required of the students during the first two years of high school. A schoolwide plan organizes this effort.
- Students needing specific help in the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and mathematics receive help in special classes or at special times in regular classes.
- Transitional classes enable students with lower skill levels to have access to higher level content and place special emphasis on the integrated skills to facilitate students' mobility between courses.
- The libraries' services and hours and teaching practices encourage students to explore and use the library for assigned work and their own interests.
- In-service programs on development of skills enable faculty members to receive appropriate and timely instruction on integrating each of the skills into their instructional program and on refining their own skills.
- In all courses at all grade levels, students receive regular feedback on their development of skills in each skill area.

The instructional practices criterion focuses on the teaching and learning that is taking place in every classroom in the school. It includes methods for teaching content and design of methods of thought and communication of a discipline; design of lessons to promote students' learning; methods and materials used in instruction; students' assignments and classroom activities; student-teacher interaction in the classroom; and teachers' expectations for the students' success.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

Teachers know the central issues, the major works and people, and the primary methods of thought and communication associated with the subject area they are teaching. They model genuine interest and enthusiasm for the subject, show the students what is interesting, and excite in them a desire to learn more about the subject. Learning time is concentrated on the important priorities of the subject, and students are taught how to learn the subject and how to evaluate the relative importance of its varied content. School leaders support staff members' efforts to improve instruction and are knowledgable about curriculum and instructional practice.

Students engage in the methods of thinking and communicating characteristic of the discipline. Classroom activities encourage students to develop and elaborate ideas, to synthesize new knowledge with their own previously acquired ideas, and to express these ideas orally and in writing. Students periodically explore selected topics in an in-depth manner as part of projects completed over extended periods of time. The proportion of learning time allocated to such projects and the average length of time per project increase over the duration of the course and over the grade levels.

Lessons are designed so that students experience a complete learning cycle. Students are prepared for the new content; the content is introduced, then taught to the students; the students apply the content first with guidance and feedback, then independently; finally, they transfer the content to new situations in synthesis with other content. Throughout this cycle, more frequently in the early phases, the teacher monitors the understanding of the students, adjusting and reteaching as necessary. Teachers employ a wide repertoire of teaching methods to match the kind of learning desired, style of learning, style of teaching, type of content, and resources available. The instruction the student receives provides him or her with the skills and knowledge necessary to develop the capacity to think and learn on their own.

Students have frequent opportunities to employ their strengths and interests in learning activities. Variations in assignments and teaching methods are utilized when needed to match students' needs and ways of learning; help is given when students need it. Pace, depth, and focus are adjusted to keep students of every ability level engaged in learning common topics. Students understand the purpose of their assignments and what they are expected to do; they know what they will learn by completing the work; and they have a good chance of doing so successfully. Students with language difficulties engage in guided language development activities appropriate to each subject taught. Students' motivation to learn is recognized and encouraged throughout the school.

Classroom discussions are used to help students recognize the central issues of the subject and to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what they are learning. Students of every level of ability are asked questions of appropriate difficulty. Classroom discussions stimulate students' interest in the subject. All students feel free to participate in classroom learning activities; each student takes an active part in the class. Teachers respond frequently and informatively to students' responses.

Expectations for learners' behavior are clearly defined and consistently maintained. Grading policies and standards are known to students and parents; they are applied fairly. Students are alerted to their progress and provided specific suggestions for improvement at regular intervals. Students receive prompt feedback on their completed assignments.

The allocation of the teacher's attention to groups and individual students is balanced, timely, and fair. Positive verbal and nonverbal support encourages learning effort and progress. Interactions are guided by the evident belief that all students can and will learn. Time is managed to maximize learning. Students' attention to the learning activity is not disrupted by other students, announcements, or other noninstructional events. Nor do they have to wait for directions, clarifications, or required materials. Excellence in work and assignments is exhibited by students at all levels of achievement; the craft of learning is taught and nurtured in day-to-day activities. Students are taught to help each other learn.

- Teachers in each curricular area are thoroughly knowledgeable of the subject. They know and are able to teach the central issues; they are familiar with the major works, know the roles and impact of the major people associated with the works, and are able to use these works and people in assignments that give life to the subject for the students. They know the primary methods of thought and communication of their discipline and are able to teach those methods to their students.

- Teachers' knowledge of their subject enables them to concentrate instruction on the important priorities of the subject and to teach students how to evaluate the relative importance of the ideas, events, works, and people by using knowledge of the subject.
- Teachers are interested in and enthusiastic about their subject and are able to instill a like interest and enthusiasm in their students.
- Teachers design classroom activities that require students to develop and elaborate the ideas of the discipline, to combine these new ideas with their own ideas, to write regularly about them, and to discuss them.
- Individual and group projects are assigned to allow students to explore areas of the discipline in depth. These projects are extended over time and become more frequent and more in-depth as the students progress through the discipline.
- Lessons include all the steps of the learning cycle:
  - Students are prepared for the new content by a review for continuity with previous learning and a check for knowledge of the prerequisites to the new content.
  - Advance organizers, such as the purpose and objectives of the lesson, some ideas of what will be learned, activities and assignments to be used, and so forth, further prepare the students for the new content.
  - The content is introduced.
  - Students participate in interactive learning activities suited to the content.
  - They use the new content with guidance and feedback.
  - They work independently with the content.
  - They transfer the content to other knowledge and skills.
- Teachers monitor students' understanding, giving feedback, adjusting the activities and assignments, and reteaching as necessary. These feedback-corrective procedures occur at regular, frequent intervals.
- Teachers have and use a wide repertoire of teaching methods to ensure students' learning.
- Instruction emphasizes the students' capacity to think and learn on their own.
- Lessons are designed to engage students' interest and employ their strengths; and pace, depth, and focus are adjusted to keep each student engaged in the lesson and motivated to learn.
- Students know what they are expected to do and what they will learn, and they expect to succeed.
- Students with limited-English proficiency, those using nonstandard English, and those with underdeveloped language skills are provided guided language developmental activities appropriate to the subject being taught.
- Class discussions regularly are used to help students identify the major issues, ideas, and events; to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what they are learning; and to stimulate interest in the subject.
- In class discussions:
  - All students participate.
  - Students at all levels of ability are asked questions of appropriate difficulty.
  - Teachers direct questions to keep all students involved.
  - Students who are stuck or answer incorrectly are cued or coached to a correct response.
  - Time is given to allow students to formulate an answer.
  - The questions help the students analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what they are learning.
  - Teachers respond by acknowledging, supplying additional clarification and illustration, modifying, applying, comparing, and summarizing students' responses.
- Class time is used for learning activities that benefit most from teachers' interaction; homework time is used for assignments suited to independent work.
- Students know what is expected of them as learners; they understand grading policies and standards, and they believe the policies and standards are consistently and fairly applied.
- Students receive regular progress reports in addition to prompt feedback on assignments, including homework, and specific suggestions for improvement.
- The teachers' attention to groups and individual students is balanced, timely, and fair.

- Instruction is managed to maximize learning.
  - Students know how class time is organized, what they are supposed to be doing, and when assignments are to be completed.
  - Time commitments are kept.
  - Students do not have to wait for directions, clarifications, or required materials.
  - Use of scarce equipment or materials is scheduled to minimize unproductive waiting.
  - Class interruptions by announcements, other students, or other noninstructional events are kept to a minimum.
  - Learning is encouraged, supported, and valued in the day-to-day interactions between teachers and students.
  - Excellence in work and assignments is exhibited by students at all levels of achievement.
  - Students help each other to learn.

Special needs programs in secondary schools are those that provide services for educationally disadvantaged students, limited-English-proficient students, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education services. The services provided to these students support their acquisition of the core curriculum and their participation in the school's total program and enable them to become successful learners. Students with special needs are not isolated from their peers; they enjoy access to this core of common learnings and participate fully in those activities that comprise daily life at school.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient (LEP) students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, school-age parents, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The special services the students are receiving support their acquisition of the core curriculum, and each student with special needs is expected to master, to the extent of his or her ability, the core curriculum provided to all students. The total curriculum experienced by the students is comprehensive, balanced, and appropriate to the students' career goals. Special services help students complete and learn from the assigned work of the regular curriculum, rather than displacing the regular curriculum. Students are experiencing success in learning the skills and concepts of the curriculum commensurate with their highest potential and are feeling positive about themselves as learners.

The methods, materials, and assignments used in the course work are appropriate to the special needs and activities of each student whether those needs result from a handicapping condition, a primary language other than English, or achievement levels significantly above or below those of the majority of students. Special services provide access to the core curriculum by providing comprehensive instruction that promotes normal progress. Beyond the core curriculum, students with special needs have access to vocational and college preparatory programs that fit their career goals. Students develop their potential by means of challenging course work, appropriate course placements, mentorship, and advanced placement whenever possible. For the high-ability or high-achieving student, special services remove ceilings, raise the conceptual level, and extend the breadth and depth of the core program.

The school environment encourages academic success for special needs students. Each adult working with the students is knowledgeable about their needs, capabilities, and learning progress and expects them to be successful in school. All adults enthusiastically assume the responsibility of helping the student with special needs realize his or her potential as a learner by planning and coordinating efforts to provide a coherent and well-articulated program. Work with students is supported by appropriate staff development activities relating to special needs and is focused on curriculum, instruction, assessment, and students' achievement.

Counseling and personnel services for students provide a strong link between special needs students and core classes. Personnel practices for students ensure access to, and support success in, this core by coordinating the students' schedules to maximize participation in the school, facilitating the ease in which students move from one path to the next, and focusing students' attentions on choices likely to lead to a strong foundation in the skills and knowledge necessary for postsecondary education and/or a career. Students regularly use the services available in addressing a wide range of concerns and feel comfortable doing so.

The schoolwide policies and procedures reflect equity in providing opportunities that maximize the students' potential and create an environment where all students realize success in learning. The academic success of the students with special needs is actively supported by the administration, staff, parents, and community. Ongoing communication and collaboration among teachers, specialist staff, counselors, and parents have resulted in an integrated program for each student, allowing him or her to experience a continuity of learning.

- Students with special needs have equal access to the core of common learning provided for all students.
  - The curriculum received by students with special needs is well balanced. It includes literature, mathematics, history/social science, science, and visual and fine arts.
  - The student's primary language is used as a vehicle of instruction to the degree necessary for him or her to have access to the regular core of common learnings, to make normal progress through the curriculum, to experience success, and to sustain adequate psychosocial adjustment.
  - Opportunities exist for gifted and talented students to take challenging courses and move rapidly through the core curriculum.
  - Students with individualized education programs (IEPs) participate in the core curriculum to the full extent permitted by their handicapping condition.
- The special services received by each special needs student support his or her participation in the core curriculum.

- Special services focus on providing students with the skills they need in order to be successful learners in the regular curriculum.

- Special services instruction is coordinated with regular instruction through the use of textbooks and other instructional materials, as well as through articulation of the skills and concepts being learned in each curricular area. Special services instruction includes the major concepts being addressed in the regular curriculum.

- The curricular materials, methods of instruction, and assignments in each course are appropriate to the student's needs, abilities, and language proficiencies.

- Learning activities in each course build on and extend the student's current level of knowledge. Initial and ongoing assessment of students' learning is timely and employs a variety of modes as appropriate to the learner, including assessment in the student's primary language.

- Students with special needs work on cooperative projects and assignments with other students; when they need help with a specific skill or concept, it is provided in class by the teacher, a peer tutor, a volunteer, or a paraprofessional.

- Special services are provided with minimum disruption to the student's participation in the core curriculum.

- Special services supplement the quality of the instruction students would receive from the core curriculum.

- The lessons and assignments received by the students with special needs are as rigorous and challenging for their diagnosed level as those received by all students.

  - Lessons and assignments challenge each student to exercise creativity and to develop the critical thinking skills of inquiring, analyzing, solving problems, and evaluating situations.

  - Students use information and ideas from several content areas to solve problems.

  - Students are expected to reason and reflect and use judgment and problem-solving strategies to make effective decisions.

  - Staff and students expect all students to be successful learners and to achieve their highest potential.

  - Gifted and talented students are encouraged to use the integrated content areas to investigate, design, and create beyond the expectations of the regular curricula. They are encouraged to develop learning and inquiry habits in order to become producers of knowledge.

- Students' work shows that students are experiencing success in learning skills and concepts of the curriculum, and it is evident that they feel successful as learners in each curricular area.

  - Students master the skills and concepts of each part of the curriculum before moving to new material.

  - A variety of materials and activities are used with students who need additional time on a given concept or skill.

  - LEP students are moving at a pace and at a success level commensurate with their diagnosed ability, and English is not an impediment to normal academic development.

- Academic success for students with special needs is enthusiastically supported by administration, faculty, and specialist staff.

  - Faculty and specialist staff work together to plan and coordinate efforts to provide a coherent and articulated program for students.

  - Both initial and ongoing assessment data are shared between the regular faculty and specialist staff.

  - Ongoing opportunities exist for regular faculty counselors and specialist staff to meet and share information about the student's progress and to plan instructional and support services for him or her, such as through team teaching or a student study team approach.

  - Parents are kept fully informed of the student's progress and participate in discussions with the student, counselor, and specialist staff regarding his or her program or courses.

  - Adults working with students model effective thinking behaviors, including withholding judgments, searching for alternatives, striving for clarity, and other strategies that reveal the valuing of thinking skills.

- Administration, teaching staff, and counselors are trained to understand the varying needs of students with special needs and are aware of learning opportunities appropriate for these students. They are:

  - Trained to interact with students and provide opportunities to enhance students' status in the school and in the classroom

  - Trained to provide comprehensible instruction in English to nonnative speakers for second language acquisition and subject matter

  - Trained on the role of the primary language at school and at home to support academic achievement and psychosocial adjustment

STUDENT SERVICES: GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

This criterion describes how services for students help students succeed in school. The term student services refers to a comprehensive program of guidance and counseling for all students in support of their academic studies and their participation in school life. The guidance and counseling program helps students develop an academic plan that aims at their highest goals and determines unique personal paths through high school; supports a positive school climate for success in school; helps students overcome behaviors disabling to learning; and removes barriers to equal access and equity. The result of high-quality student services is that all students learn how to plan effectively, deal with societal and educational change, and take personal responsibility as independent lifelong learners.

Students receive academic counseling, a guidance curriculum, individualized student planning, and delivery systems of student support. The goal of the program of these services is to enable students to understand their growth and development and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to make decisions on their educational and career paths.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, minority students who are underrepresented in college, students achieving at a level significantly below their potential, students at risk of dropping out of school, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special educational instruction and services.

Integrated Program

Clearly articulated policies and procedures ensure that every student receives an integrated program of services which facilitates personal and academic success and includes academic counseling, a guidance curriculum, individualized student planning, and systems of student support regardless of the number of counselors at the school. Students experience a schoolwide system of guidance in which they are able to discuss their own paths through high school with their teachers and/or counselors. All students are encouraged to pursue the most rigorous course of study at which they could be successful.

Guidance Curriculum

Students are systematically taught the guidance curriculum through classroom and group activities, thereby acquiring necessary and timely decision-making information. They learn that the primary purpose of schooling is the acquisition of knowledge and skills. They receive knowledge of self and others, develop positive mental health, and acquire and use life skills. In addition, students learn and apply planning and survival skills to academic, personal, prevocational, and precollege problems and decisions and develop a personal vision of their future and what they want to be. Students experience a rewarding learning environment based on the cooperative involvement of guidance and counseling staff, teachers, students, and parents.

Individualized Student Planning

Timely guidance, counseling, and referral services enable students to address educational, career, personal, and social concerns and to engage in careful planning, programming, and monitoring of their learning and development. Through individualized planning, students are assisted in appraisal and placement so that they can plan, monitor, and manage their academic learning and their personal and career development. Students receive timely and regular counseling services to meet their immediate needs and concerns. Through these services and individualized planning, students are able to remove barriers and to pursue effectively their unique paths through high school. Administrators, guidance and counseling staff, and teachers actively identify, encourage, and assist minority students who are underrepresented in college to pursue a path that will lead to admission to a four-year college or university.

Student Support Systems

Student access to support systems within and outside of the school enhances learning and successful participation in school life. Student services are clearly defined and widely known, and the total school community understands its specific role in these services. The school's student services, including student health care, psychological support, and services for students with special needs, are comprehensive and well integrated. Administrative leadership and guidance and counseling staff members coordinate and collaborate with the community in prevention and early intervention programs for students at risk of dropping out of school and provide educational alternatives and opportunities for minority students who are underrepresented in college.

Assessed Student Needs

Assessed student needs are addressed in priority order through a written scheduled program of activity which includes academic guidance, challenging educational programming, character development, individual and group counseling, group guidance, peer counseling, and student and parent advisement. The use of appropriate technology and computerized guidance systems enables students easy access to information. The program of services, which includes a guidance calendar, is well publicized.

Program Support

Administrative leadership in the area of student services is evident throughout the school. Leadership promotes the integration of counseling roles and guidance strategies into the total school curriculum and program. Communication between counselors and teaching staff is open and productive. Staff development activities are designed to help guidance and counseling staff members and school staff efficiently deliver support services in order to meet the identified needs of students. An ongoing review is made of the services provided, which are evaluated in a timely manner by students, parents, and staff. As a result of the evaluation, the allocation of resources, including time, is examined and changes made to improve the quality of services to students.

Exemplars

- The guidance program consists of support services provided by a number of school staff, including counselors, administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and others, to help students:
  - Gain understanding of their social, intellectual, and emotional development
  - Become knowledgeable about educational, career, and social opportunities
  - Learn decision-making, problem-solving, and self-management skills
  - Combine these insights and skills in becoming independent, active learners
- The counseling program is an important and central focus of guidance. It ensures communication between school counselors and students about issues that facilitate or inhibit personal growth, academic achievement, and planning and decision making.
- A program of services is comprehensive. It includes academic counseling, guidance curriculum, individualized student planning, and support systems within and outside of the school.
- Students acquire regular and timely information to enable them to make informed choices as they plan and select their program. They are provided with guidance curriculum, advisement, individual and group counseling, computerized guidance systems, guidance handbooks, newsletters, bulletins, workshops, and mentorships.
- Students develop planning and survival skills through guidance and counseling activities:
  - Guidance curriculum units and activities
  - Student advisory groups
  - Shared activities between and among counselors, teachers, parents, students, and outside resource people
  - Individual and group counseling
- Planning and survival skills include:
  - Educational and career planning
  - Study techniques
  - Goal-setting
  - Decision-making
  - Effective communication
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Conflict management
  - Stress management
  - Self-esteem
  - Multicultural understanding
- Students experience a rewarding learning environment that is characterized by:
  - A clear sense of the school's academic purpose
  - Contact with supportive caring adults
  - A sense of community
  - A balanced curriculum
  - Clear academic objectives
  - Monitored academic progress
  - Rewards for academic success as well as success in extracurricular and co-curricular activities
  - Student and parent involvement
  - Team problem-solving
  - School-community cooperation
  - An orderly and safe campus

- Students acquire assistance in removing barriers to equal access and equity and overcoming disabling educational, career, personal, and social problems through cooperative schoolwide guidance and counseling approaches:
  - Regular encouragement to pursue more rigorous courses of study
  - Systematic monitoring of students' academic progress whereby students and parents are informed when a student is performing below potential before the problem becomes chronic
  - Early identification and establishment of programs for academically able students from groups traditionally underrepresented in colleges and universities
  - Early identification procedures by teachers and counselors for students with poor attendance or poor study habits, dropout potential, and other at-risk factors
  - Timely and regular counseling
  - Individual and group counseling
  - Peer counseling
  - Identification and referral process to outside social agencies and community-based organizations for problems involving alcohol, drug abuse, suicidal tendencies, pregnancy, eating disorders, and other life-threatening situations
  - Student study-team approaches to review individual student profiles
  - Multidisciplinary approaches by means of student support service teams
  - Affective curriculum and programs that increase feelings of self-esteem and combat social isolation and alienation
  - Cooperative strategies to build peer, cross-age, and/or adult tutorial and mentor programs
- Guidance and counseling are acknowledged by and reflect priority needs as a result of:
  - School board policy statement
  - Guidance and counseling program goals and objectives
  - Student outcomes and competencies
  - District plan for guidance and counseling services
  - Guidance calendar for service delivery

- Leadership roles within guidance and counseling are evident by:
  - A systematic program of activities to support students' educational process, such as grade-level guidance curriculum, timely and regular counseling, and community mentorships
  - Coordination of school and community resources to meet emotional, physical, and social needs of all students
  - Consultation with parents, staff, and community through individual meetings, workshops, seminars, large-group discussions, and other means directed to the educational, career, personal, and emotional/social development of students
  - Presence of proactive (prevention) services, such as dropout prevention programs; developmental services, such as affective curriculum; and reactive (remediation) services, such as drop-in or crisis counseling
  - Assistance to curriculum specialists, teachers, and staff in formulating instructional practices which ensure equal access, instruction, and opportunities for all students
  - Articulation and collaboration with institutions of higher education, business and industry, and professions to encourage and support underrepresented minority students
- Staff development activities are designed to help guidance and counseling staff and school staff deliver support services efficiently to meet the identified critical needs of students.
- Student services are evaluated continuously and annually by:
  - Administration, analysis, and reporting of needs assessment data
  - Analysis by an outside consultant
  - Interviews with students, parents, and staff
  - Evaluation of individual guidance and counseling activities through questionnaires

The improvement processes are all those activities that involve the school and its staff in continuous organizational, curricular, and personal development in order to improve the quality of the instructional program, the environment and culture of the school, the skills of the staff, and students' learning. The criteria for assessing the professional and institutional renewal efforts at the school revolve around the extent to which the activities promote a high-quality educational program. A key goal for the school as an organization is the establishment of an effective and meaningful improvement process.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The school's decision-making processes are clearly defined and widely known, and all involved understand their roles in these processes. The processes emphasize broad-based collaboration and include parents, students, and the community at large. The school site council is integral to the school's decision-making process and it plays a central part in the decisions made to improve the school.

Improvement goals reflect a strong academic orientation throughout the school, and the school's improvement processes focus on preparing students to lead productive and satisfying lives. Changes in the larger society as well as the local community, demographic changes, intellectual and cultural transformations, technological changes, political movements, and changes in the expectations people have for schools are considered in the setting of improvement goals.

The school's leadership promotes and supports improvements in the schools' program consistent with the school's and district's goals. Time is allocated to a regular process of analyzing and evaluating data about students' performance and motivation, staff's performance and morale, and implementation of the instructional program. Based on discussion and understanding of what causes the results evident in these data, plans for improvement are made and implemented.

The goals and objectives of the program are clearly defined, and standards and expectations for students' achievement and behavior are known and shared by staff members and students throughout the school. The allocations of resources, including time, and the working relationships of everyone at the school are focused on achieving these goals and objectives. The school's plan provides a focus of alignment of curriculum, instructional practices, and evaluation. The coordination between the regular program and services for students with special needs are maintained through ongoing planning efforts by teachers, specialist teachers, the principal, and other administrators.

An open and trusting rapport is evident among teachers and administrators. Administrative and faculty leaders recognize that teachers are the primary decision makers in their classrooms and actively support their efforts to improve instruction. Teachers readily participate in the development and implementation of improvement efforts throughout the school.

Staff development activities are ongoing and are planned, carried out, and evaluated for the purpose of improving the job-related knowledge and skills of principals, teachers, instructional aides, classroom volunteers, and other student support personnel, including parents, who regularly interact with students. Commitment to continued participation in staff development activities is obvious. Time allocations reflect the importance attached to personal and organizational renewal by individual faculty members and administrators and collectively by the school community. Adult interaction at the school sustains high interest in professional growth and improvement.

Supervision of instruction is ongoing and systematic. The procedures are understood by all staff members; the process is clearly aimed at instructional improvement; and the results demonstrate the efforts of the entire staff to make supervision effective and purposeful. Teachers receive feedback that facilitates instructional improvement as it is related to their teaching methods and students' learnings. The feedback is based on data collected in classroom observations, students' work, and discussion. Principals and other supervisors receive feedback about the process and their skills used in making the process work.

- Teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members work collaboratively to plan, implement, provide follow-up, and assess the school improvement efforts.
  - The improvement efforts are designed to involve the school and staff members in continuous organizational, curricular, and personal development and to affect students' learning outcomes.
  - A regular assessment of staff and school improvement activities helps promote better student learning.
- The schools' staff is knowledgeable about the decision-making process:
  - Who is responsible for what
  - What kinds of evaluation data are routinely collected

- How those data are analyzed, by whom, and how they are used in planning programmatic changes
- How to use the ongoing planning process to institute programmatic changes

- The school-site council is at the center of the improvement efforts at the school:
  - Council members participate in the assessment of schoolwide needs and establish priorities for improvement efforts.
  - Council members, working with others at the school, establish improvement goals and objectives and design strategies to achieve those goals and objectives.
  - Council members determine how resources, including school improvement funds, will be used to achieve the goals and objectives.
  - They periodically monitor the implementation of the improvement activities and at least annually evaluate their effectiveness.
- The improvement goals and objectives focus on enabling students to lead successful and productive lives. They address concerns beyond the immediate school, such as:
  - Changes in society
  - Technological changes
  - Demographic changes
  - Intellectual and cultural transformation
  - Political movements
  - Expectations for the school
- The improvement efforts of the school are consistent with the district's and school's goals.
- Administrators and faculty organize, manage, and support an ongoing improvement process that has broad-based staff and parental participation and commitment. This process includes:
  - Evaluation of students' and staff's performance
  - Evaluation of the curriculum and its implementation
  - Analysis of symptoms and determination of cause
  - Plans for action
  - Strategies for implementation
- Time is regularly allotted for collecting, analyzing, and evaluating data about the school's program and students' learning and for discussions about probable causes and solutions in areas in need of improvement.
- A broad-based collaborative planning process results in:
  - Standards and expectations for students' achievement and behavior are known and implemented throughout the school.
  - The efforts of everyone at the school are focused on achieving the goal and objectives of the plan.
  - Alignment exists among curriculum, instruction, and evaluation in each department.
  - Services for students with special needs are coordinated with the regular instructional program through the ongoing planning efforts of those providing the services.
- The teachers demonstrate commitment to the school's ongoing improvement process:
  - A trusting and open rapport exists among teachers and between teachers and administrators.
  - Teachers are recognized and supported as the primary decision makers within their classrooms.
  - Teachers are motivated by their sense of efficacy--the belief that what they do makes a difference in students' learning.
- Staff development activities are teacher-directed, experiential, and problem-centered.
  - Staff development is school-based and addresses individual and schoolwide goals and specific student needs.
  - The assessment of students' progress in relation to the curriculum determines the instructional areas requiring either individual or whole staff instruction and support.
  - The assessment of the participants' strengths, competencies, interests, and needs determines the content of the staff development program.
- The staff development activities are helping staff members refine existing skills as well as learn new skills, attitudes, and behaviors that are more effective in the classroom setting, and gain knowledge necessary for effective implementation of the curriculum.
- The staff development activities use effective teaching practices, including:
  - Modeling
  - Guided practice
  - Coaching
  - Peer observation, support, and assistance
  - Follow-up support for staff

- Staff are directly involved in planning and evaluating staff development activities and are committed to continued participation.

- The administrators actively support the program through participation, allocation of time, and use of fiscal and personnel resources.

- Instructional supervisors give timely feedback to teachers based on observations of classrooms, students' performance, and discussion. Feedback and coaching include:

  - Implementation of goals and objectives of the curriculum
  - Management of the classroom, including maximum use of time for instruction
  - Interaction with students
  - Design and presentation of lessons
  - Development of thinking and communications skills
  - Opportunities to express creativity

The culture of the school relates to the impact of the school's total environment on those who are a part of the organization and those who interact with it. The school's culture affects not only the faculty and students; it also affects the parents and the community at large.

Culture is a tone, an atmosphere that is apparent throughout the school. The culture reflects the school's shared values, its sense of mission, its dominant ideas, its philosophy. Culture identifies what is important; it provides meaning to staff, parents, and students; it integrates the several objectives of the organization into a sensible whole.

Culture is communicated by symbols, ideologies, language, and stories. While the culture is primarily shaped by the school's leaders, it is communicated most effectively by the people who make up the school. The more that the students, faculty, and parents speak of what is really important to the school, the more pervasive are the shared values that make the school what it is. A school's culture that is well articulated by its storytellers is effective in enabling the school to achieve its mission.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The school's culture is directed toward students' learning. Principals, faculty, parents, and others working with the students demonstrate a shared purpose to develop each student's cultural, moral, intellectual, and emotional character to its greatest potential. There is evident belief that this purpose is primary for the school and possible to achieve for virtually every student. The school's goals, policies, practices, and attitudes reflect the primacy of this purpose.

The school's leaders (administrators, faculty, students) actively shape and promote the culture of the school; they build purpose into the social structure of the school; they shape the vision of the school; they promote and protect the school's values; they strive to develop the school into an institution that responds to the highest academic, moral, and social standards. The school's leaders initiate activities that focus the creative energies of the organization so that the school's purpose and vision shape the everyday behavior of teachers and students inside the classrooms.

The environment of the school is safe, orderly, and supportive. Students find school a good place to study and a pleasant place to be. Schoolwide standards for students' behavior are perceived by students and staff members to be fair and equitably enforced. Instances of vandalism and/or violence on campus are very rare; students' absenteeism and dropout rates are maintained at a minimum level. The faculty's and students' expectations of students' behavior help make the school's environment conducive to learning.

Leadership is shared among administrators, faculty, and students, and collaboration among the leaders is evident. Departmental chairpersons provide leadership in their departments and throughout the school that promotes high standards of faculty professionalism. Teachers' and students' organizations and their leaders contribute significantly to the promotion and protection of the school's culture, including the school's mission and purpose.

A climate of innovation and experimentation allows faculty members the professional freedom to pursue the school's mission with greater accomplishments. The teachers feel a strong sense of efficacy, and they believe in their own ability to attain high levels of students' learning. They are inspired by the vision of the school's educational mission and work to translate that vision into reality in their classes.

Administrators and teachers continually seek to develop themselves as professional educators and as human beings. Peer relationships include frequent informal discussion on educational issues, mutual help, mentoring support, training, and retraining; they help in defining and redefining school values; they support the notion of educating and reeducating. Problems and weaknesses are openly recognized, and there is a candid search for improvements. The values of serving students, professional development, and self-renewal are integrated in the school's culture.

- The school's focus on learning is commonly shared by administrators, teachers, students, and parents.
- The educational mission of the school is easily identified by people who visit the school.
  - The school seems vibrant, healthy, successful, businesslike, effective.
  - The atmosphere evidences the learning that is taking place.
  - The behavior of the people in the school reflects the learning mission.
  - The academic achievements of students and faculty are evident.
- Faculty, students, parents, and administrators communicate the school's culture by:
  - Recounting the tales of its heroes
  - Acting out its myths

- Participating in its rituals
- Developing its image
- Clarifying its metaphor

- The school's focus on students' learning is reflected in:

  - School's philosophy and policies
  - Daily decision making
  - School's climate
  - Attendance and discipline policies
  - School and classroom management practices

- The values of the school are known to all. Administrators, faculty, and students are able to articulate the values and are comfortable sharing them with outsiders.

  - The leaders are known to protect and promote the enduring values of the school.

  - The values affect the behavior of the people in the school.

- The school's leaders promote transcending values that motivate faculty, administrators, students, and parents to raise themselves and the school as an organization toward higher ethical and social purposes.

  - These transcending values are clearly articulated in the school's philosophy.

  - Justice and equity are evident in the interactions of teachers and students, administrators and faculty, the school's staff and parents.

  - High expectations of behavior promote an environment that bespeaks the transcending moral and social values.

- Standards and expectations for students' behavior have been established schoolwide and are equitably and consistently enforced. The consequences for violating schoolwide rules are well established, widely known, and fairly enforced.

- The school's culture places a high priority on a safe and orderly environment.

  - Disruptive behavior is at a minimum.

  - Personal safety is not a problem in the school.

  - The classes, library, corridors, and lavatories are monitored to prevent discipline problems.

  - Students are motivated to exert self-discipline and to develop high expectations of behavior for themselves and other students.

- A clear system exists for recognizing and rewarding outstanding students' and faculty's accomplishments.

- Absenteeism of both students and staff is not a problem at the school; established procedures exist for maintaining attendance at a high level.

- Violence and vandalism are rare occurrences.

- The students' dropout rate is minimal.

- The schools' leadership is shared among administrators, teachers, and students. The educational leaders of the school:

  - See their major function as shaping the culture and the vision of the school.

  - Speak often of the school's mission, and their behavior reflects a deep commitment to it.

  - Work to develop the community's consciousness of the school's mission.

- The school's leaders, including leaders of teachers' and students' organizations, engage others to improve themselves and their school continuously. They:

  - Influence others toward personal and organizational improvement.

  - Interact with others to develop mutual goals for the school and themselves.

  - Care about others, their professional development, and their creative application of the school's purpose to their offices and classrooms.

  - Instruct others in the school and then work with them closely over a period of time.

- Teachers enjoy a large degree of professional autonomy; they are encouraged to use their best professional judgment in carrying out the school's mission of achieving high levels of students' learning.

APPENDIX B: GUIDE FOR CONDUCTING THE SELF-STUDY

The self-study is the foundation of the secondary program review. The reasons for this emphasis on the self-study are as follows:

- The quality of planning for improvement is dependent on the quality of the information collected and the analysis of that information; collection of information and analysis occur mainly in the self-study phase.
- The quality of the self-study as perceived by the school community determines the meaning accorded the visit of the external review team and any subsequent planning.
- A high-quality self-study is central to accomplishing the goals for program review: The self-study is the part of the review where most of the information about the school is generated. It also serves as a model for continuing evaluation and is the basis for planning for improvement.

In summary, the self-study carried out by the school community determines the success or failure of the entire secondary program review. A school carrying out a half-hearted pro forma self-study will reap at best a nondescript review or at worst an embarrassing external review that will result in meaningless planning for improvement. The guide for conducting a self-study has been included in this document to emphasize the importance of the self-study. Guidelines on procedures and techniques for collecting information for the visit by the external review team are also included.

This guide outlines suggested processes and strategies for the collection of information for schools engaged in a self-study. It covers the following areas:

- Organizing for self-study
- Applying the schoolwide criteria
- Applying the curriculum criteria
- Developing the self-study summary
- Using a self-study

Organizing for Self-Study

Introduction

As schools organize for self-study, there must be clarity about responsibilities and involvement. Secondary schools have been described by some as departments within schools and loosely coupled organizations. Nowhere, as some describe it, is the norm of privacy more common or more sacrosanct.

The criteria for program review are designed to promote a more cohesive and coordinated view of secondary schools. In carrying out the self-study, it is not sufficient for a participant to contribute only as an individual or to be interested only in the results that affect one's own department. Six of the criteria are schoolwide and require individuals and departments in the school to look at

the sum of all the parts--the school as a whole and its effect on students.

As a school organizes for self-study, it will be setting up the ways in which staff will be contributing as members of three different groups: (1) individuals; (2) members of departments; and (3) members of the school as a whole. Self-study at these three levels reflects an expectation for an improvement process to thrive at each level.

In addition to the involvement of the administrative, counseling, and instructional staff, students must be included in the self-study. Students who participate should reflect the diversity of the student population. They should be selected from the college-bound and general track students; vocational-technical education students; remedial or other special services students; advanced-placement students; at-risk or potential dropout students; students from each grade level; students from the various races and cultures at the school; transfer students; recent graduates; students involved in extracurricular activities, including sports and academic, dramatic, or other clubs; and students who participate in student government. Finally, the school may also elect to include parents, members of the school-site council, and representatives of the local community.

Each participant in the self-study is involved in analyzing where the program is vis-a-vis the criteria. At the individual level each member of the school community is charged with (1) self-analysis of practices that pertain to each criterion; (2) peer observation and feedback, applying selected criteria; and (3) focused discussion with others about various aspects of the school program and the impact of each on the students, as represented in the quality criteria.

All teachers in their departmental work groups are involved collectively in looking at both the curriculum and the schoolwide criteria. The departmental perspective is important in the self-study because departments have identities, reputations, and norms which have a direct impact on what students experience in school, and departments are effective organizing units for change. For the curriculum criteria, the departments compare their curricula with state and professional standards and review the implementation of the curricula. The results of this comparison and review are then judged according to program review criteria.

At the departmental level for both the schoolwide and curriculum criteria, teachers analyze their own practices as they pertain to the criteria for their content area, and group analysis of departmental norms, policies, and practices that pertain to implementation of the schoolwide and curriculum criteria. Peer observation and focused discussion are the basic methods to use.

For the seven schoolwide criteria considered in the self-study, all participants are involved in shaping the individual and departmental input into generalizations about the school. Good input from the individual and departmental level will permit the staff and students to see the school as a whole and identify areas in need of improvement as well as areas of strength. At the schoolwide level individuals are charged with going beyond their particular classroom, content area, responsibility, or perspective and working to synthesize what they know with what others know. They must not exempt

themselves from accountability for the impact of the school as a whole.

The Importance of Establishing a Schoolwide Perspective

The first step in the self-study process is deciding what questions to ask, what activities to observe, and what data to review to be able to compare each aspect of the school program with the related quality criterion. Decisions must be made on what classes to observe; what students to follow through their classes; what sorts of questions to ask the students, the staff members, the administrators, the council members, and others involved in the various parts of the program; and what sorts of records are to be collected, including students' work samples, students' achievement data, records of awards, minutes of meetings, and so on. These decisions also go a long way toward determining the usefulness of the self-study as well as the program review by establishing a schoolwide perspective of program quality.

In the development of procedures for collecting information about the school program, certain sets of data should not be overlooked. They include the school performance report, with locally developed indicators of success; the recommendations of the most recent WASC accreditation review and follow-up action taken in response to those recommendations; and the results of the California Assessment Program and other norm-referenced tests analyzed for patterns of achievement for all students and for specific groups of students over time.

Good reviews and, subsequently, good planning occur when people have good information and the energy to act on it. The self-study must not be so burdensome that it discourages quality interaction among staff, students, and the community. To avoid having the self-study feel like an academic exercise or meaningless paperwork, it is important to keep the following in mind:

1. Information collected is to be used by the school and the external review team to meet the goals of the program review: diagnosis, improvement, and planning.

2. The diagnosis provided by the self-study is shaped by the quality criteria.

3. Those organizing the self-study must guard against overburdening individuals, departments, or the school as a whole.

Artifacts and Opinions

The artifacts of a self-study are the materials collected. They include examples of students' work and projects, videotapes of teachers conducting class, students working, records and transcripts, memos, and minutes of meetings. Artifacts constitute the best way for a school to determine the validity of opinions which are the other major kind of information. It is important to solicit the opinions of students, parents, staff, and administrators. Opinions provide valuable information on the overall sense of a school. Whenever possible, people should be asked to provide examples or artifacts to support their opinions.

In summary, each school is urged to individualize its procedures for collecting information. If the suggestions for collection of data are seen as items on a menu from which schools pick and choose

what fits their situation, the information collected will be more meaningful and powerful.

Using the Quality Criteria for Self-Study

The criteria for secondary program reviews are grouped in two main sections—(1) schoolwide criteria; and (2) curriculum. There are seven schoolwide criteria: (1) Students' Paths Through High School; (2) Integrated Skills; (3) Instructional Practices; (4) Special Needs; (5) Student Services: Guidance and Counseling; (6) Improvement Processes; and (7) the Culture of the School. The eight curriculum areas that are reviewed include: (1) English-Language Arts; (2) Mathematics; (3) Science; (4) History-Social Science; (5) Foreign Language; (6) Visual and Performing Arts; (7) Physical Education; and (8) Vocational-Technical Education.

The concepts embedded in these criteria are not new. They represent significant agreements in the current analysis of effective secondary education and incorporate the sound curriculum, effective educational practice, and applied organizational management.

Applying the Schoolwide Criteria

The schoolwide criteria are designed to focus on what students experience as individuals, as members of groups (enrollees in advanced placement classes, special classes, and so on), and as a total student body. Typically, separate groups of adults at the school, such as teachers, department chairs, counselors, and administrators, work with students on discrete bits of content or need. Students experience the discrete bits and synthesize them into their experience in school. The adults often are not aware of all the different pieces that students put together. Using the criteria to look at the school programs will help schools to see what the school experience is for different kinds of students and determine the degree of congruence between what is stated policy and what students and other members of the school community actually experience.

The quality criteria are summative statements of a high-quality program that is actually experienced by the student. When applying the schoolwide criteria for self-study, members of the school community organizing and conducting the study should follow the steps listed below:

1. Everyone involved in the self-study must become acquainted with the contents of the criteria and must be knowledgeable about the specific criterion or criteria he or she is to apply.

2. Those who are to apply a given criterion must decide what procedures they will use and what specific information they will seek out. For example: How will they follow individual students through their day at school? What students should they select? What classes will they observe? For how long? What specifically should they observe while in each classroom? Who will they talk to? About what? What pieces of paper, and what other artifacts should they review?

3. The process of collecting information about the criterion being applied is carried out as planned.

4. Then the individuals who applied each criterion discuss what they have found, pooling their information to develop a common perspective of the program in operation and its impact on students.

5. This common perspective is then compared with the criterion. Areas of the program that reflect the description in the criterion are identified as the program's strengths; those that do not match the criterion are potential improvement areas.

6. The group must next decide which of the potential improvement areas should be selected for action. For example: Which would have the greatest impact on the criterion area as a whole? Which would offer the greatest potential for success? In what sequence should they be approached?

7. Finally, the conclusions of the group are recorded so that they can be included in the self-study summary and shared first with the school's community, and then with the visiting review team.

In the pages that follow, the quality criteria are treated individually so that the participants in the self-study can use the criteria singly or together. A general overview of the criterion is followed by a guide for gathering information and finally by a model for conducting that portion of the self-study. Each school's self-study will be unique to that site, and participants will want to adjust the self-study to fit the needs of the particular school. Note: The following information should be considered a guide and not a mandate.

The criterion for students' paths through high school focuses on the policies and opportunities that determine the student's experience in courses and programs during high school. The term students' paths refers to the parts composed of coursework and other structured elements experienced by a student. Included are a common core of curriculum experienced by all students; a rich offering of curriculum and structured experiences beyond the common core; and a carefully monitored network consisting of skills, training, and counseling that permits students to move between paths and attain their highest ability. Regardless of the path taken, students should be informed and have the potential to move between paths and be assured of a high-quality comprehensive program in each path.

When gathering and analyzing information for this criterion, keep in mind the following major themes:

1. Students achieve a core of common learnings. In addition, specialized courses enable students to attain their goals and prepare themselves for higher education or work.

2. The school's policy and practices ensure that all students have equal opportunity for quality learning situations. The bridges between the paths that students might take through high school allow them to move to more rigorous or challenging courses. Students are encouraged to take higher-level classes and are supported when they do.

3. Parents, teachers, counselors, and students work together to set the best path for each student. The paths are regularly evaluated to ensure that they are comprehensive and balanced.

4. Students and parents receive frequent assessment of and advice about student progress. Students see how what they are learning fits together and feel that what they are learning is important.

The key to getting information about student paths is in the unit of analysis: the individual student's path. The criterion loses its meaning if one only looks at cross-sectional data. Therefore, self-study procedures should be designed to gather data on whole paths of individual students.

Sources of Information

- People
  - Students, including graduates
  - Counselors
  - Department chairs
  - Teachers
  - Parents, including members of the site council
  - Representatives of local businesses and colleges

- Documents
  - Course offerings overall, including core requirements, enrichment and extension offerings, and remedial courses
  - Prerequisite course patterns
  - Students' transcripts
  - Scheduling and time lines for registration
  - Number of students receiving guidance about paths
  - Reports of students' work in colleges and businesses
  - Individuals involved in guidance regarding paths
  - Teachers' knowledge about paths--entry requirements and the rigor of courses
  - Written material for registration guidance
  - Other

Possible Procedures

- Review documents in order to develop profiles of paths taken by different groups of students.
- Conduct in-depth case studies of paths for a representative group of students. Interview a couple of graduates.
- Carry out department analyses of students' paths.

The criterion for integrated skills focuses on the skills of thinking, learning, listening, speaking, writing, reading, and calculating, which are common across all areas of the curriculum. The term integrated skills refers to the extent to which schoolwide curriculum and instruction integrate these skills and require students to develop and utilize them in an integrated fashion. In this criterion both the identified skills that all students experience as necessary for their success in school and the systematic plan for a school staff to monitor and teach these skills are considered. Within this criterion is the educational goal of equity in that the degree to which students integrate skills is often the critical factor in opening a number of diverse paths.

When gathering and analyzing information for the integrated skills criterion, keep in mind the following major themes of the criterion:

1. All students in all courses are developing and using these integrated skills.

2. This focus on integrated skills is enabling students in all paths to move into and succeed in a more demanding curriculum.

3. All students are expected to use and increase their thinking skills. The development of higher mental processes is central to instruction in all subject areas.

4. In-service programs are helping teachers increase their own skills and implement activities and assignments in their classes that develop these skills.

Sources of Information

- People
  - Observation of instructional activities
  - Students' discussion of instruction in the integrated skills and their perceived need for such instructions
  - Staff's discussion of which integrated skills are taught, when, where, and how they are taught, and to what extent such instruction is needed
  - Discussions with librarians and teachers about library use
  - Other

- Documents
  - Students' assignments
  - Integrated skills evident in curriculum
    (a) Skills students are presumed to have
    (b) Skills taught directly in curriculum
  - Course expectations
  - Schoolwide expectations
  - Testing data on integrated skills
    (a) Standardized
    (b) Formal classroom
    (c) Informal classroom
  - Remedial programs (reading, mathematics, writing)
  - Library collection, usage, and schedule
  - Other

Possible Procedures

- All teachers are interviewed about their expectations for these skills and the degree to which students exhibit them. Consider each of the identified skills.

- Interview students on what skills are required to do well in a particular course, whether they have the skills, how they get help in developing the skills if they do not already have them. Consider each of the identified skills.

- Each department reviews its curriculum, including course objectives, to determine the extent to which the development of the skills, including thinking skills, is embedded in the curriculum.

The criterion for instructional practices focuses on the techniques and strategies teachers use to impart the curriculum and promote learning. It is analogous to the integrated skills criterion in that while the integrated skills criterion goes beyond curriculum content to learning, the instructional practices criterion goes beyond curricular content to pedagogy. Central to the instructional practices criterion is the notion of the teacher as a professional; that is, an individual with a professional knowledge of curriculum and craft. The content of the criterion is based on the premise that teachers know and employ effective teaching-learning strategies in all of their interactions with students.

When gathering and analyzing information for the instructional practices criterion, keep in mind the following major themes of the criterion:

1. Teachers are knowledgeable about the central issues, the major works and people, and the primary methods of thought and communication of their discipline. Students' learning time is concentrated on the important priorities of the subject.

2. Students' lessons: (1) prepare the students for new content; (2) introduce the content; (3) involve students in interactive activities suited to the content; (4) require use of the content with guidance and feedback; and (5) require use of the content in independent work and through transfer to new situations in synthesis with other knowledge and skills.

3. Class time is used to encourage students to develop and elaborate ideas, and discussions are designed to help students sort out the critical issues on the subject.

4. Teaching methods and assignments are matched to the learning situation. Type of content, style of learning, style of teaching, and resources available are considered, with emphasis on developing the students' capacity to think and learn on their own.

5. Expectations for students' performance are clear and fair; students receive timely feedback; time is managed to maximize learning; teachers' attention is balanced, timely, and fair; and the belief that all students can and will learn guides interactions among teachers and students.

Sources of Information

- People
  - Observation of instruction
  - Teachers' discussion
  - Students' discussion
  - Other
- Documents
  - Students' work
  - Lesson plans
  - Videotapes of instruction
  - Staff developmental activities
  - Departmental meeting agendas and minutes
  - Other

Possible Procedures

- Teachers pair up for peer observation based on criterion. Each pair observes in three to four classrooms in their own and another department.
- Sample portfolios of students' work are analyzed.
- Each department in a staff meeting discusses the instructional strategies used and records ways in which students receive information, are encouraged to learn, acquire skills and knowledge.
- Department members interview students regarding issues raised in the criterion.
- A group of teachers is selected and trained in peer observation. This group observes randomly selected classes within each department.

Conducting the Self-Study for Students with Special Needs

The criterion for students with special needs focuses on the curriculum program offered the students with special needs and the support received by these students to be successful participants in the regular program. Basic to this criterion are the concepts of equal access to the core curriculum; a rigorous and challenging curriculum program commensurate with students' highest potential; and a balanced curriculum, including one that is delivered, when and to the degree necessary, by the use of the primary language as a vehicle of instruction. Also central to the special needs criterion are the school policies, staff developmental activities, support services, and commitment of staff and community that support the delivery of a well-coordinated and well-articulated program for students. They are thereby enabled to experience success in their academic endeavors as well as their daily school activities as a whole.

When gathering and analyzing information for the special needs criterion, keep in mind the following major themes of the criterion:

1. The special services received by the student help him or her master the content of the core curriculum.

2. The methods, materials, and assignments used in coursework are appropriate to the special needs and abilities of each student. Coursework is challenging.

3. Teachers are knowledgeable about the needs, capabilities, and learning progress of the students, and they work together to provide a coherent, well-articulated program.

4. Schoolwide policies and procedures encourage and support an environment in which all students experience success in learning.

Sources of Information

- People
  - Students, including graduates
  - Special services staff
  - Teachers--specifically, their knowledge about special services
  - Counselors
  - Parents of students with special needs

- Documents
  - Students' assignments
  - Individual education plans (IEPs)/ individual learning plans (ILPs)
  - Initial and ongoing assessment data of students
  - School plan
  - Staff development topics
  - Course outlines and expectations
  - Specialist staff meeting minutes/policy statements

Possible Procedures

- In-depth case studies of a sample of students are conducted. How the total program works and how the different regular and special components work together are investigated.

- All departments review the availability of special services and resources and the use of teaching strategies and materials to address the needs of this group of students effectively.

- The school-site council reviews the school plan and analyzes the effectiveness of its implementation at the school as it addresses the needs of students with special needs.

The criterion for student services focuses on the guidance program and its impact on students' success. The term student services refers to a comprehensive program of counseling and guidance for all students in support of their acquisition of the school's curriculum and their participation in school life. The counseling and guidance program is designed to provide a positive school climate for students to experience success in school, help students overcome behaviors disabling to learning, and remove barriers to equal access and equity. To be assured of a high quality of student services, all students learn how to plan for and deal effectively with societal and educational changes and to take personal responsibility for becoming independent, lifelong learners.

When information on the student services criterion is being gathered and analyzed, the following major themes should be kept in mind:

1. All students receive counseling and guidance services and have equal access to program services. The program is designed to anticipate the needs of and be responsive to all students and includes a guidance curriculum, individualized student planning, and systems of student support. As a result of the program, students:

   - Acquire necessary decision-making information.
   - Learn to apply planning and survival skills.
   - Experience a supportive and rewarding learning environment.
   - Address educational, career, personal, and social concerns.

2. Student services refers to a comprehensive program of counseling and guidance and is an integral part of the total school. Services are widely known and understood by the entire school community.
3. The program of services is written down, is well publicized, and includes a scheduled calendar of program activities.
4. Leadership is evident throughout the school and all staff members support and provide guidance services.
5. Ongoing staff development activities support program delivery.
6. An ongoing review of the services is made to promote continual improvement. The program of services is evaluated annually and revised accordingly.

The key to getting information about student services lies in the analysis of how student services affect students' success. Therefore, self-study procedures should be designed to gather data from observations, interviews, and documentation which reflect the results and comprehensive nature of the school's student services.

Sources of Information

- People
  - Students, including graduates
  - Parents, including members of the school site council
  - Administrators
  - Department chairs
  - Teachers

- Representatives of local businesses and colleges
- Community-based organizations and social service agencies

- Documents
  - Statement of school policy and philosophy on student services
  - Handbook for guidance and counseling services
  - Guidance calendar for delivery of services
  - Guidance and counseling goals and objectives and student outcomes and competencies
  - Guidance and counseling materials and curriculum
  - Guidance and counseling assessment and questionnaires
  - Evaluation of guidance activities
  - Daily counselor logs and client contacts
  - Review of records on dropouts, truancy, attendance, and so on
  - Case studies
  - Staff development activities

Possible Procedures

- Review guidance curriculum and program activities.
- Conduct in-depth case studies of a representative group of students, including graduates.
- Analyze student services and the effects on student outcomes.

Conducting the Self-Study for the Improvement Processes

The criterion for the improvement processes focuses on the policies and practices of organizational renewal in a school, the climate resulting from the policies and practices, and the components of the improvement effort. The term improvement processes refers to all the activities related to organizational renewal in a broadly conceived sense, including planning and organizing for change, identifying needs, setting goals, implementing changes, carrying out staff development, and maintaining effective schoolwide leadership. The assumption is that a deliberate and systematic forum for renewal is operating and that the renewal effort is part of everyday life at school.

When gathering and analyzing information for the improvement process criterion, keep in mind the following major themes of the criterion:

1. The decision-making processes used by the school are widely known and broadly based and include the school site council.

2. The improvement goals reflect the academic focus of the school; the goals and objectives of the program are clearly defined and widely known; and the school plan provides a focus for the alignment of curriculum, instructional practices, and evaluation.

3. Collaboration exists among teachers and administrators, and teachers readily participate in the development and implementation of improvement efforts at the school.

4. Staff development is an ongoing activity designed to improve the job-related knowledge and skills of all who interact with the students. High interest and commitment to professional growth and improvement are evident.

5. Supervision of instruction is ongoing and systematic and is aimed at instructional improvement.

Sources of Information

- People
  - Teachers
  - Department chairs
  - School site and school advisory council members
  - Student council members
- Documents
  - School plan
  - Minutes of the school site and the school's advisory council meetings
  - Other meeting agendas and minutes, such as department meetings and the school's leadership meetings
  - School policy statements
  - Staff development activities; evaluation of the agenda

Possible Procedures

- The school site council researches, recounts, and records the improvement activities during the past few years through a series of interviews with teachers, administrators, and students.

- The department chairs analyze the current school plan in order to determine the status of the proposed improvement effort. Each department discusses its own department-level improvement process as it complements the school-level process. Each chair reports to the school-site council as a whole.

- The school site council discusses the school improvement process, including goal setting, planning, implementation of improvement strategies, and evaluation of the implementation of the school plan to date.

Conducting the Self-Study for the Culture of the School

The criterion for the culture of the school describes the tone or atmosphere of the school which reflects shared values; the sense of mission; and the dominant ideas and philosophy of all who are a part of the school organization. Central to this criterion is the idea that the school culture, which is shaped and promoted by the leaders (administrators, faculty, and students) at the school, in turn shapes the day-to-day activities and interactions of the students, the teachers, the administrative staff, and parents and community members who interact with the school.

When gathering and analyzing information for the culture of the school criterion, keep in mind the following major themes of the criterion:

1. The administrators, teachers, students, and parents believe that student learning is the primary purpose of the school.

2. School leaders (administrators, teachers, and students) actively shape and promote the culture of the school, focusing energies so that the school's purpose and vision guide the everyday behavior of students and teachers in the classroom.

3. Students find school a pleasant, safe, and orderly place to be and the environment conducive to learning.

4. Teachers enjoy the freedom to experiment, to be innovative; they feel a strong sense of efficacy.

5. Administrators and teachers value service to students, self-renewal, and professional development.

Sources of Information

- People Sources
  - Students, student leaders, graduates
  - Teachers, department chairs
  - Administrative staff
  - Specialist staff, including counselors
  - Parents; members of the community
- Document Sources
  - School policy statements
  - Minutes, agendas of school site and school advisory councils, department meetings, curriculum council or department chair meetings, student government meetings
  - School plan

Possible Procedures

- The school-site council researches the aspects of the school's culture by interviewing selected people and by reviewing of documents.
- A small group of students, teachers, administrators, and parents interview randomly selected members of their peer group about each aspect of the school's culture. Each group reports its findings to the school site council.

The curriculum criteria have been developed in concert with the model curriculum standards now available to school districts. These curriculum criteria, although specific in content, contain a common set of features that run throughout each of the criteria. The common elements include the content of what students learn, instructional practices specifically related to the content, course sequence, staff development, and leadership. The criteria have been designed to be summative and are not intended to be used to generate detailed or complex portions of a single curriculum. They are intended to provide a general indicator of what a high-quality program would be like in operation and provide a state toward which schools should strive.

Applying the Curricular Criteria

As previously mentioned, the quality criteria are intended to be used as summary statements of overall program quality. For the purpose of effective self-study, a deeper view of the school curriculum must provide the base of the study; and the quality criteria must provide the common language and cohesion that leads to in-depth analysis. For this reason, then, the model curriculum standards are used in concert with the quality criteria for curriculum during the self-study.[1]

At the beginning of the curriculum self-study, it is necessary to determine the participants, the extent of their participation, and the net result of the participation. Typically, key self-study participants are teachers; department chairpersons; program coordinators; specialists; counselors; school leaders, including academic deans and principals; and other interested personnel. The school staffs may wish to include in the self-study of curriculum areas experts from outside their school, including staff from the community and state colleges and universities. All outside teaching staff should be prepared for their role as a curriculum specialist and mentor.

The second step in the self-study is a thorough preparation for participants that includes a review of the model curriculum standards, the quality criteria for the curricular areas, curriculum frameworks and handbooks, and significant articles related to curriculum. This reading is meant to provide the background for the review of the artifacts within each department, such as syllabi; course outlines; departmental policy, including grading and discipline; and other data collected as part of the self-study.

The basic procedures for conducting the curriculum self-study are: (1) the self-study participants first review the model curriculum standards for their subject area, then compare the assignments and activities of their students with those described in the model curriculum standards; and (2) they compare what is being taught in their

[1] In certain subjects, model curriculum standards do not exist. For these subjects, standards are usually available from state and national curriculum associations.

department to the model curriculum standards supplemented by district curriculum guides. Other resources that would be useful in this analysis of curriculum and instructional practices include:

- Statement on Competencies in English and Mathematics Expected of Entering Freshmen, available from the State Department of Education
- University of California/The California State University English and mathematics diagnostic tests
- School performance report, both state and local sections
- State curriculum frameworks and handbooks, available from the State Department of Education

This analysis of curriculum and instructional practice is the essential first step in applying the curricular criteria. From this point the self-study would follow the steps described on pages 66-67 for the schoolwide criteria.

Specific ways to implement this portion of the self-study are endless and should be tailored to fit the school setting, the programs, and the needs of the participants. Regardless of the precise direction of the self-study, several common strategies should be used throughout:

- Collect information from a variety of sources, including observation of instruction, the thoughts and opinions of students, the review of students' work and students' achievement, and the thoughts and opinions of teachers and other instructional staff members.

- Back up perceptions with actual students' work. The self-study is meant to uncover what the students actually experience from the curriculum, not simply what is offered.

- Look for a rich mix of student assignments designed to give in-depth experiences in a specific situation or example within a topic. Look also for coverage of all the topics.

- Consider varying points of view, including those of individuals, departments, and total staff, to determine what is the overall effect of the curriculum, how what one department does fits in with other aspects of school life, and how the organization as a whole supports and strengthens the curriculum.

- Maintain a broad base of involvement in the self-study. Included here are good use of teachers, support staff, counselors, and other staff as appropriate in gathering information about the program; and analysis and synthesis of the results of the data collection.

- Make use of individuals from outside the immediate school setting to get a long-range view of student preparation and performance. The use of department chairs from intermediate, junior high, or middle school settings as well as staff from institutions of higher education helps to provide a total picture.

- Review all of the model curriculum standards for a discipline when viewing a single content area. Note areas of alignment, indicate areas of variation or disagreement, and analyze what factor of the program may have produced the variance. Determine if it is an area that may be appropriate as a focus for school improvement. Outline those areas that reflect particular strength within the curriculum.

Self-Study Summary

Once all necessary information has been gathered, analyzed, discussed, and compared with the quality criteria, a summary of the self-study is developed. This summary should convey a thoughtful and professional review of the schoolwide program and the curriculum areas defined in the quality criteria.

The summary should not be a lengthy document. One page is probably not enough. On the other hand, a 50-page document may be filled with too much detail and, therefore, too cumbersome to be meaningful to the school community.

The summary of the self-study for each criterion should include the following:

1. A written record of the result of comparing the school program with the issues, concepts, or ideas in each of the paragraphs of the quality criteria.
2. A summative value judgment about the results of that comparison.
3. Identification of priority improvement efforts.
4. Recognition of the strengths of the particular aspects of the program and/or aspects in which there has been significant improvement.

The completed summary will include the results of the self-study for each of the 15 quality criteria. The section that includes the results of the self-study in the two curriculum areas selected by the school for in-depth review most likely will be more full-blown than those for the other five areas. The conclusion reached in the other areas, however, will be of great value to each department in planning curriculum, instructional, and organizational improvements.

How the Self-Study Is Used During the Review

During the program review the school's self-study is used as a base for discussion about the school's program in operation at the site. It is sent to each member of the review team before the review so that it can be used to frame the review strategy and ensure that important points are covered. As the review progresses, the review team will use the self-study as a guide in reviewing the school's program, validating the results of the self-study when the findings of the review team confirm the results, and seeking additional information when the self-study results and the team findings differ.

When the diagnostic portion of the review is complete, the key planners, the principal, and the review team will consider the identified areas of improvement within the self-study as they make recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the program and recognize areas of program strength.

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